A novel by

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Note from the author: This novel reflects Christian values and principles. The characters, including the Criakins, are Christian creations, and their descriptions (including the Latinized scientific names) are done for world-building and are not intended to be taken as fact.

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Any characters that are featured in the novel will be listed at the Cast of Characters section at the end of the book.

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Introduction

Dear IDLE reader, you may be familiar with the classic tales that feature valuable lessons, including the classic Shakespeare plays for example. Many classics from back in the day were filled with Biblical truths and lessons and they can be relatable to this day, especially those that were written many decades ago, even if they were laced with pathos of comedy.

As an author, I do tolerate the Christian lessons and comedy that is contained in this novel. Though I would sometimes like to put some glasses on Celljoy, so he could see the humors, truths and values that can be visible.

As you know, this small introduction is written as a homage of Miguel de Cervantes' prologue to his immortal classic Don Quixote, which was written as a parody of chivalric books that many Spanish authors created around that time, even if Cervantes himself was in prison when crafting his masterpiece page by page.

You could compare Celljoy and Budsof to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza also, especially with what misadventures they may go through along the way in this tale. And as they exhibit good decisions to reflect their Christian faith, Celljoy and Budsof strengthen their friendship as they are willing to peacefully bless others and have lots of fun.

This small prologue is written to precede this imaginative, humorous and heartwarming tale that not only would reflect the Christian faith in their eyes, but also their journey, their walk with God and the true meaning of Christmas. I honestly hope in return that those who read it, would laugh with the humor and feel uplifted by the good morals and lessons that the characters would learn.

Before the story begins though, I want to share with you a little disclaimer here: None of the story

is real. This is a work of creative Christian fiction and is not intended to be written as true. Do not take it as Scripture whatsoever.

Also, the Criakins in this novel are portrayed as God's creations in the Criakins series. None of the creatures are independent deities, spirits or objects to be worshipped, as in animism and pantheism. I do not promote or endorse animism or pantheism entirely in any way.

Vale.

Chapter One

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6 (BSB)

It was mid-afternoon when the snow was falling from the puffy gray clouds. It had been a few years since the lifeforms came down to Earth via the small meteorites, and since then, the creatures scientifically classed as *'caelum creaturae'* (known as criakins) had spread all over the world, helping and benefiting the environment with their friendly and helpful nature.

You must know, then, that the lifeforms became regularly careful when it comes to traveling on their own. Even when it comes to dangerous wildlife like mountain lions and wolves, which roam around the snowy landscapes day and night,

though not bears because they hibernate during the winter.

So whenever a lifeform goes traveling across other parts of the region outside of Janesboro or other places they live around, a companion is needed whenever they feel safe. That's the case with two specimens in this story: Celljoy, a fluffy-eared friend and Budsof, a leafy bud.

During the day as the snow continued to fall softly, Sandra Mallory, an African-American woman and reporter for CJBY-TV, started sending out invitation letters for the lifeforms in the two large picturesque forests. She came up with an idea to host a colorful yet large Christmas party in her new home.

The house she and her husband now reside in is the size of a large mansion, it had around 10 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms and a large living room. And because of that, any lifeform that comes in her new home can sleepover at any time.

As she had dropped the last of the invitational letters, Sandra began walking back home from the forests with a sense of optimism.

“I cannot wait to bring my friends over to celebrate.” Sandra said. “I want to make this Christmas special, not only to just give out gifts to others, but to also celebrate Jesus’ birthday tonight.”

Typically ever since a few years ago they arrived, the lifeforms have celebrated Christmas inside their own homes they created on their own in the forests, by creating and crafting gifts themselves, bringing their own tree that they obtained, and decorating it with homemade decorations and lights before praising the Creator for the birth of his son. It is such a peaceful occasion for the species ever since they came to Earth.

Even after the tragic death of Noah Stevenson, Celljoy and all the others felt a sense of peace and love as they warmly sat around the underground sanctuary and watched some heartwarming Christmas specials from their TV.

But with the invitation letters from Sandra, this will be the first time that her friends would spend some time at her home, as Sandra had been feeling alone lately. Calmsnug was the one of a few creatures who first checked out Sandra’s invitation

letters, when they spotted the envelope after coming out of the elevator:

“*Hello friends,*

I have decided that me and my husband Max, that all of you friends are invited for our large Christmas Eve party. We’ll prepare the food and some snacks, but you’re free to bring some of your own too for us as well. Any friendly criakin is allowed, as well as humans too.

God bless you all,
Sandra Mallory”

The curved creature smiled warmly as it began sharing the letter to the other creatures Calmsnug joined.

"That's really sweet of her, I gotta tell everyone about this." Calmsnug said, smiling at the letter before going back inside the underground sanctuary for preparation.

—

Meanwhile, far away from their hometown of Janesboro, at a poolhouse located around the trail

of Peterborough, Celljoy and Budsof were spending their own time having lots of fun and enjoying some relaxation in the warm pool water.

“Well my friend, what do you think of chilling around this large pool?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“This was really relaxing, thank you!” Budsof replied.

“No problem,” Celljoy said, “We could come back here next time if you want?”

“That would be sweet of you.” Budsof answered, smiling. “Say, I actually have one interesting question, if that's ok with you?”

“What question do you have?” Celljoy asked curiously.

"Can we do something fun here?" Budsof asked, giggling, "Like something wild and dangerous, like a pack of fireworks? So we could do some silly harmless pranks on each other."

That was an interesting question, and the fluffy-eared specimen had to consider it carefully.

But since he was peaceful and kind by nature, he quickly shook his head.

“Uh well, I’m not sure if that’ll be a good idea, bud.” Celljoy chuckled, “Let’s not think of that silly idea, alright buddy?”

Budsof chuckled too after, patting his friend on the back with its long leafy arms.

“No worries then.” Budsof laughed.

As Celljoy and Budsof came out of the pool and dried themselves off, Celljoy’s own phone began ringing on his bench. It was a gift from Sandra, so he could contact his friends whenever he liked. As he got to the bench, he turned the screen around.

“It’s Sandra!” Celljoy gasped, before answering the phone.

“Hey Celljoy, where are you?” Sandra asked, smiling.

“Oh we’re at a large poolhouse at Peterborough,” Celljoy chuckled, “But what are you doing in the meantime?”

“Me and my husband are going to host a Christmas party for all the lifeforms, wanna join?” Sandra asked.

“Sure! I’d love to have some fun with my friend Budsof.” Celljoy replied.

Budsof was confused, “A party?”

“That’s good, I’ll see you there.” Sandra said.

Once Celljoy hung up, his bud friend was now looking at him curiously.

“What party, Celljoy?” Budsof asked.

“Oh we’re invited to a party there, wanna join?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“Ooh of course!” Budsof said, jumping up in joy, “I’d love to spend time with you and your friends there.”

The fluffy specimen smiled, hugging the bud warmly.

“Do you wanna know something interesting about me?” Celljoy said.

“Oh, what is it?” Budsof asked.

“Those wings on my back don’t really do much honestly, they’re just for show.” Celljoy laughed, “Though it would be nice if I would be able to fly with them.”

“That’s ok. Hold on a second, I gotta go do something.” Budsof said, “I’ll be right back, Celljoy.”

Budsof walked away, while Celljoy relaxed on the bench.

“See ya.” Celljoy softly said, “Well, I’ll just relax here for a while until he comes back.”

Celljoy then closed his eyes and snoozed on the bench, where he began dreaming something sweet. It was his starvelvet, licking on him playfully.

“Hey worm buddy!” Celljoy said.

He proceeded to hug the thick organism with his arms, but as he did, more and more starvelvets came around to lick and snuggle with him. It was

like a squishy nap with the friendly velvet worm creatures.

—

An hour had passed, but Budsof was nowhere to be seen. Opening his eyes, Celljoy looked around. He was now concerned that his friend had left him alone.

“Budsof,” Celljoy frowned, “Where are you?”

Picking up his phone, Celljoy then walked around the large poolhouse, hoping to see where the bud went. It was quiet. Too quiet as he looked cautiously around, he was not having some sort of a fear that a monster is now stalking him.

“Where could he be right now?” Celljoy shook, “I thought he would be back soon.”

Then as he finished speaking, something shrieked behind him. Celljoy looked fast behind, where in a dark area, glowing eyes were staring at him with a maniacal laugh. Without such a flinch of heroicness and bravery, Celljoy jumped like a cat and fled away.

“BUDSOF!” Celljoy screamed.

As the glowing eyes came forward from the darkness, it was a budchest, giggling because he pulled a harmless prank on the poor fluffy rabbit.

Celljoy continued to run around the poolhouse until he went into a room he hadn't entered before, where upon opening his eyes once again, it was Budsof. But it wasn’t just living, it was now a statue, not moving or blinking whatsoever.

Placing his hands together in a panic, Celljoy let out a horrified gasp.

“Oh my stars!” Celljoy exclaimed.

Looking closer to it, Celljoy’s eyes began leaking out tears as his breath quivered. Crouching down, the fluffy specimen felt nothing but utter horror.

“Who turned you into a statue?” Celljoy cried, “I-I didn’t even say goodbye to you...”

Celljoy hugged around the statue, all while crying his heart out in a waterfall of tears.

“I didn’t want to lose you too.” Celljoy cried, “What am I going to do now without you?”

Out of nowhere though, Budsof walked out of one of the rooms and saw Celljoy hugging and crying around the stone statue.

“Uh Celljoy?” Budsof asked, “Why are you hugging my statue with your tears?”

Celljoy’s eyes opened up in horror, “Did it talk?”

Then he looked up to see his friend standing there behind the statue he was hugging. He was now stunned.

“I-I can explain!” Celljoy said, shaking, “It was not what you think, I thought you t-turned into a statue.”

Budsof chuckled wholeheartedly.

“Of course not, silly bun.” Budsof chuckled, “I just built this statue with another creature that was in this building.”

Celljoy was shaking, “Is that why I got scared by whatever it was that laughed with those glowing eyes?”

“Don’t worry about that, that was Budchest.” Budsof said, “He’s harmless, just loves to play silly pranks out of nowhere in dark areas. Aside from that however, what do you think of my statue?”

“No worries, I forgive you.” Celljoy sighed with relief, “And about the statue, it looks spot on. What if someone would create a statue of how I look or even that futuristic looking version of myself? Though honestly, that would be impossible.”

“Hmm good question.” Budsof thought, “Though who would wanna bring my statue?”

“Maybe a calmsnug?” Celljoy asked, “She’s strong.”

“Sure! But how will you do that?” Budsof curiously asked.

“Maybe there’s another calmsnug that could deliver it to Sandra.” Celljoy said, “Anyways, wanna come to the Christmas party?”

“Yes, I’d always love to have a journey back home with you.” Budsof hugged, smiling.

Both began hugging together before they walked out. Thus setting out, the two friends paced along, going through the long hallways without much incident.

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As both Celljoy and Budsof waved goodbye to the receptionists at the poolhouse, they both walked out of the poolhouse, all the while, Celljoy was also holding the Budsof statue too.

At this moment it so happened that they walked further into a path and saw something familiar. It was a calmsnug, wearing a delivery hat. It seemed to Celljoy to be what he was expecting.

“Hey calmsnug!” Celljoy called.

It stopped, waving its arms hello to them. “What can I do for you guys?” It said.

“Oh yes, well can you deliver this Budsof statue to Janesboro for Sandra Mallory?” Celljoy asked.

The creature looked carefully at the statue, and then grabbed the statue and put it on a little cart it had alongside.

“I can do that for you guys, thanks!” the calmsnug said, smiling before it went.

“You’re welcome, God bless you and Merry Christmas!” Celljoy waved, smiling.

“Hope you have a wonderful Christmas!” Budsof said.

They then continued to walk further into the forests of Peterborough, where they reached a freezing cold lake far away. They came in sight of a sereneful area of a waterfall on one side of the hills, where water went down from there and drifted around the river.

Glowing colorful crystals were strung around with vines around many trees, giving it such a dreamy vibe to it. It could be possible that the other lifeforms strung the homemade lights on the

treelogs as a way to make the area look beautiful for others to check around.

Celljoy couldn't help but imagine in his mind that these lights were crafted with tiny fireflies in mind. Perhaps the Cudflies used some sort of natural phosphorescent material.

Budsof stared at his friend. cluelessly on why his friend was staring out into space, though he couldn't help but be enthralled and imagine what Celljoy's vivid imagination could be like.

"Celljoy, are you alright?" Budsof curiously asked.

His imagination clicked off, looking back down to see his friend.

"Oh, yeah I'm ok." Celljoy replied, chuckling. "I was just amazed by what I am seeing right now. I wonder who put these lights up?"

"I agree." Budsof said.

"Say, how's things going for you friend?" Celljoy asked, smiling.

“It’s sweet!” Budsof said back, “I get really curious whenever I explore across the forests of Janesboro. That’s how I made many more friends there alongside you and the others.”

“That’s nice, I’m honestly grateful you’re there for me.” Celljoy said softly, “Especially since I dearly missed Noah Stevenson years ago.”

“You’re so sweet.” Budsof said, “I am also happy to be your friend too. How are things for you also?”

“Really good also.” Celljoy replied, “I had this wonderful little dream when I was sleeping back at the poolhouse. Many starvelvets were snuggling with me and licking me playfully. It was calming.”

“I can imagine them being really sweet.” Budsof said.

As they reached a large pond, many stepping stones were on the surface, which would make things easier to go across the cold lake.

“You go first, if that’s alright?” Budsof asked.

Celljoy nodded, hopping with his feet onto the cold stones carefully, trying not to get his feet freezing cold. But as he almost reached the last stone, he became unbalanced with his bare feet and fell right into the water.

“Are you alright, Celljoy?” Budsof giggled.

The specimen got up from the cold water, his fur was now soak and wet, drooping water. The jacket was wet but helped keep his body dry. It made Celljoy’s teeth chatter from the freezing waters, and would have frozen his hands or feet after getting out, but he didn’t mind.

“I’m alright, but it’s so cold-d-d.” Celljoy laughed.

Getting back up onto the stone which caused him to fall into the pond, he hopped onto the last stone and right onto the land on the other side. He shook off the water, drying him fast.

“Your turn now, bud.” Celljoy said.

Budsof giggled before hopping onto each statue. It was much easier for him without much incident, but almost fell because his leafy wings were flapping a bit. But once he landed on the other

side with Celljoy, they both laughed together before continuing on their walk.

“Now where was I?” Budsof asked, “Oh right, because we’re helpful and friendly creatures from the heavens, we like to do good for others too.”

“I agree with you. The creator wants us to make others happy and spread the love and gospel to others with our actions.” Celljoy said, “The funny thing about that starvelvet dream is that one of them had honey all over the wiggly stripey body. I’d never had honey before.”

“Me neither.” Budsof giggled, “I got another question, what is Christmas really about? I know what the holiday is, but never understand what it’s about.”

“Well, Christmas is a special holiday for a reason.” Celljoy softly said, “I know Noah would have loved to celebrate it if he was alive. The truth about Christmas is that it isn’t about the money or the gifts we receive. It’s also not just the family or friends we spend together. It’s the celebration of Jesus’ birthday. We celebrate his birthday by praising through prayers and offering our gifts we create towards others too.”

Budsof was wide eyed. He had never known that's what Christmas was about. He then looked up at the now-cleared up sky, full of stars.

"That is interesting." Budsof paused, "I didn't know that's the real meaning behind Christmas. I know people like buying gifts for others. Thanks for that, I'd love to celebrate this with you."

Budsof then hugged Celljoy, he looked at him, where its fluffy bud was noozling around his jacked. The fluffy specimen then hugged the bud along.

"I'm glad to hear that." Celljoy said.

They embraced for a long snuggly hug, when out of nowhere…

CRASH!

Something fell right next to them, causing both of them to jump up in horror. Its body was gem shaped with a symbol imprint of love on its face, with a cloud surrounding its bottom half, a glowing halo, ball antennas and long arms with fingers. Both screamed as it got up.

“Oh hey friends, I hope I didn’t scare you.” It said.

“Oh, h-hey!” Celljoy stuttered, awkwardly chuckling “Amorflow, you have made us both almost jump right out of our skins.”

“I-I think you made my stems extend in the air…” Budsof cringed.

Celljoy looked at him in shock, before giggling.

“Uh Budsof, I don’t think it's the right time to say something so silly at this moment.” Celljoy giggled.

“I’m sorry if I scared you both, I just saw you guys talk about Christmas and wanted to join in.” Amorflow said.

“That’s ok, I was just excited to go to Sandra’s Christmas party.” Celljoy said.

“That’s great, I’d love to join the party.” Amorflow said, “Though to be honest, I never knew your friend was going to host a party. I was just having Christmas dreams in my snuggly little

nap after taking a break from being in the heavens for long.”

“Ooh, you’re an angelic being?” Budsof asked.

“Yep, I’m Angelheart’s friend.” Amorflow replied.

“Sweet, I can imagine those dreams would have lots of sugary canes and hot coco.” Budsof said.

Then another creature came out of nowhere, bumping right next to amorflow, causing the former to fly out onto the ground. Its body was unusually cloudy yet fluffy, complete with large butterfly-like wings that are larger than its body. It was a mallow related to the other mallows, yet its shape was more oval.

“I’m sorry about that.” The creature said.

“Butterfloat?” Celljoy chuckled, “Are you ok?”

“Oh no worries, I’m all good.” The flurakin said, “I didn’t hurt myself or Amorflow.”

“You’re fluffy like a cloud, hehe!” Amorflow giggled.

“Thanks, now anyways, I was looking around the starry sky, hoping to find that one special star.” Butterfloat said.

“Oh, you mean the star of Bethlehem?” Celljoy asked curiously.

“Exactly, the Christmas star.” Butterfloat replied, “That’s the star where the three wise men were following, where baby Jesus was born.”

“Nice, you have good skills of being a star hustler.” Celljoy said.

“Say both of you, do you have gifts in mind for Sandra’s Christmas party?” Budsof asked, smiling.

Butterflow moved its long arms around its body to think about this question, but its mind was mostly occupied, focusing on finding the star.

“Sorry, I don’t really have any gifts in mind. I am occupied with the star search.” Butterflow giggled awkwardly.

“That’s ok, you’re free to think of a little gift.” Amorflow said, “After all, it's the gifts that keep

on giving alongside all the prayers and the family."

“Thanks, well I gotta be going right now.” Butterflow said, “I gotta continue my search. Take care!”

Butterflow flew its large wings up and away, waving goodbye to all of his friends.

“Well I gotta be going too as well, gonna continue my nap for another hour before I go to Sandra’s party.” Amorflow said, “Take care also, guys.”

“God bless you friends!” Celljoy and Budsof said in unison.

Amorflow flew with its wings back up to the thick tree limb and rested in its small little nest it created. Both Celljoy and Budsof waved goodbye.

“Well Budsof, we should get going till it's too late, shall we?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“Yep, but should we explore some more before we continue?” Budsof replied.

“Sure!” Celljoy said, “What could possibly go wrong?”

As they both walked further into the forests, the cold chilly night was silent around them, only sounds of wolves, foxes and other mammal noises were audible. But that didn’t bother him and Budsof, as since they’re together, they felt like nothing bad would happen to them.

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Meantime, back at Janesboro, Sandra Mallory was setting up the snacks in each tray on the tables. Max Pearlman was also taking a shower in the meantime.

“Hey Max?” Sandra asked, calling him from downstairs.

“Yeah?” Max replied, while he was washing himself in the hot water.

“I got all those snacks ready for our friends, are you looking forward to showing up in your best clothes?” Sandra asked, smiling.

“Of course, but I gotta look hard in the bedroom closets.” Max chuckled.

“That’s ok, take your time.” Sandra replied.

Suddenly, the door bell rang. Sandra came and opened up the door. It was a calmsnug, who had a delivery cap on its head.

“Is this Sandra Mallory?” It asked.

“Oh yes, it's me.” Sandra replied, “Is there a delivery for me?”

“Yep, Celljoy wanted me to deliver this to you from Peterborough.” The calmsnug said.

It then showed her the life-sized statue of Budsof, surprising the woman.

“Whoa, is that Celljoy’s friend?” Sandra asked, “Who built that?”

“Celljoy never asked me that, but he could tell you when he arrives.” The calmsnug replied.

It then carried the statue to Sandra and brought it inside with her. It was heavy like a rock boulder,

but didn't want to ruin it, so she helped out by bringing it inside.

"What was that noise?" Max asked.

"Some calmsnug brought a package to me from Celljoy." Sandra replied.

"Oh, I just gotta see once I'm out." Max said.

Once the statue was placed on the ground, the calmsnug waved bye to Sandra before it walked out of the house.

"Thank you for the gift Celljoy." Sandra said, whispering in her breath as she looked into the statue, "This party will be great, I can feel it."

Little did she know that her friends, Celljoy and Budsof, would undergo a long adventure that would test their friendship and faithfulness to each other, all while enduring through many misadventures.

Chapter Two

"A generous soul will prosper, and he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."

Proverbs 11:25 (BSB)

As Celljoy and Budsof continued their journey, the former suddenly saw something cuddly on the snowy logs.

"Budsof..." Celljoy whispered.

"Huh?" Budsof asked.

"Look..." Celljoy whispered back.

They both look at the logs, where white ferrets were crawling around really fast while chittering in a squeaky voice. Eventually one brought lots of

nuts to the other ferrets. It squeaked more before cuddling together.

“Aren’t these cute?” Celljoy asked.

“I agree, they’re as white as the snow itself.” Budsof giggled.

The bud then went and grabbed some nuts for the ferrets. It was cautious when it saw Budsof, but once its long leafy arms lowered down to show the nuts for it, one of the ferrets then crawled around its arms, grabbing each nut with its tiny arms. Budsof giggled.

“You’re so generous, bud.” Celljoy said.

“Thanks, I’d like to do something in return.” Budsof blushed.

As the bud then went back to Celljoy, they left the area after they both waved goodbye to the ferrets. As they went out into the forest, they suddenly heard an unexpected yet unnerving noise far away from where they were.

Despite the stars illuminating the night sky alongside the moon, the forest itself wasn’t really

as bright as the sky. The snow had covered a lot of the old dried autumn leaves and with each step both friends made, it gave them a sense of tension.

“Friend, know that by the Lord’s will, we shouldn’t really be afraid of such noise.” Celljoy assured, “Maybe it is just an ordinary noise from far away.”

“Bud, I don’t know if that dreadful noise could count as ordinary.” Budsof chuckled worryingly, “Aside from you and the usual wildlife, I don’t see anyone else lately at this time. We could easily turn around and take ourselves out of danger, even if we have to run like cowards.”

“How can you see such danger, Budsof?” Celljoy asked.

“Well we’re in a dark forest, the moon helps us to see through, but the sounds I hear around us gives me a sense of fear.” Budsof stuttered.

“There’s nothing to be afraid of, bud.” Celljoy replied, “Hold on to peace for the Lord, what if we get scared for nothing?”

“That’s true,” Budsof said, “But fear has sharp eyes, it can prowl around like a lion.”

With this conversation passing through like the breeze of the night, Celljoy and Budsof cautiously walked around, hoping to hear where that noise was coming from. Despite trying not to be frightened, Celljoy instantly felt regretful that he didn’t bring his starvelvet to be by their side.

As they continued on, they then reached a rocky place that had some lakes and rivers, surrounded by the trees. Around one of the lakes, there was a large house that had a water wheel. It was making that exact noise they heard before. Their nerves ended up being for nothing as Celljoy felt relief in his heart.

Budsof on the other hand, couldn’t help but cover his mouth up with his leafy arms. The cheeks puffed up, filled up with laughter that was about to burst out of his mouth. As he couldn’t hold it longer, Budsof began laughing so hard. He couldn’t help at all.

Celljoy looked at his friend, the bud let go so heartily that he tried to hold his cheeks back down

with both leafy hands, trying not to stir up trouble from other wildlife.

Four times Budsof stopped, and as many times did the bud's laughter break out afresh with the same violent bursts of laughter like the first time. Celljoy grew his laughter, above all when the bud said what he said mockingly:

"Friend, know that by the Lord's will, we shouldn't really be afraid of such noise. Maybe it is just an ordinary noise from far away." Budsof laughed.

Celljoy, seeing his friend laughing and saying what he said before, began to chuckle and laugh along and nudged on the bud's soft body.

"Why did we get scared?" Budsof asked, laughing much harder than before.

"I have no idea." Celljoy replied.

They continued their laughter until they calmed down after all those fruitful bursts.

"Say uh, Celljoy?" Budsof asked cautiously. "I forgot to ask you something before we heard this

noise. How come amorflow knew both of us before?”

“Oh, that creature must have known us when it watched us from the heavens before.” Celljoy replied, “Though since it was sleeping on the treebush, it must have watched us when we had gone to the poolhouse.”

“Interesting to know.” Budsof said, “I just didn’t think that it would know me though. Probably it also saw some herds of my kind before?”

“Possibly, though to be honest, I’m not that good at explaining them well.” Celljoy awkwardly laughed.

“There’s nothing to be ashamed of,” Budsof said, “No one is perfect, we’re the Lord’s creation, doing our best. Even if we don’t explain well.”

“Have you ever heard of that mythical national park that we may reach soon?” Celljoy asked curiously, “You may enjoy checking it out.”

“Mythical?” Budsof asked, with considerable interest.

“Yep, trust me, it will be incredible.” Celljoy said, “Many lifeforms had been recently telling a story of some mythical species. Just like us, they usually wisely create their own homes with materials found in the forests. It can be a haven for those who are lost, humans and lifeforms. They can provide as much food and entertainment as possible. Any hugs can also be provided too, and because I had been there before, I’d been getting lots of hugs and petting.”

“That’s fascinating, I’d love to see that place.” Budsof said.

“They’re also good suppliers for Christmas trees as well,” Celljoy continued dreamily, “If we get one from there, Sandra may be lucky for us if we provide a nice tree for her. It would be much more complete with the fireplace she has in the house.”

Budsof couldn’t help but think of images of the friendly beings in the national park being kind and cheerful towards the bud, providing any kind of food and being hugged by them. Its eyes glowed brightly like diamonds.

“I’m so excited to check that out!” Budsof said enthusiastically.

“Same, I want to provide something for her Christmas party.” Celljoy said, deep in thought, “Hopefully some homemade cranberry sauce, and also the turkey, gravy and potatoes that Sandra could provide back at her home.”

Having the hope and optimistic outlook for their homecoming, Celljoy placed his hands together and looked above.

“Truly, I don’t really know what would lie beyond our journey.” Celljoy followed, “But there’s only one thing I have in mind. All we have to do is dream the impossible dream. This is our quest and our journey back home. We should be optimistic no matter what.”

As he finished explaining, something ruffled in one of the bushes. Then, he heard a mischievous giggle behind him. Celljoy jumped and looked around frantically, hiding right behind his friend.

“What was that noise?” Celljoy asked, shaking. “It just cannot be Budchest again. Please pray that it’s not him.”

“Uh, oh!” Budsof exclaimed, “Celljoy, look out!”

Celljoy then looked as something that resembled an oak flew out of the bush. They both looked at it, where it was pink and shiny from its appearance alone.

“What is that?” Celljoy asked.

Budsof looked closely, “I-I don’t know, could it be-”
Out of nowhere, it expelled a lot of pink smoke, causing them to stand away, but they couldn’t escape the large expelling smoke.

“We’re getting gassed!" Celljoy exclaimed.

They tried to run out of the smoke, but their visions were dazing out of view and they collapsed.

—

Sandra was now awaiting her friends to come over, all while Max finished drying up from the bathroom and went to the closet to dress up. He was now wearing a black and white tuxedo suit and pants, complete with some Christmas decorations.

“Is that your best suit?” Sandra asked.

“I believe so.” Max replied, “I know it's not the best, but I tried to find a good enough suit for me to wear for this party.”

“It doesn’t matter, I’m happy you finally came dressing up with whatever you find in the closet.” Sandra said.

As Max looked around the large living room, he suddenly saw the large statue with his own eyes.

“Wow!” Max exclaimed. “Is that a statue of... Budsof?”

“Yep, Celljoy assigned a Calmsnug to deliver it to us.” Sandra said, “Though I have no idea who made the statue.”

Then the doorbell rang once again. They both got into the front door and opened it up. It was the velvet worm organisms that somehow climbed up to ring the doorbell. The stars on the large orange thick tail were glowing, while the yellow and orange stripes around its long wormy body were glittering from the snow it fell on them.

“Starvelvets!” Sandra said, “It’s nice to see you all again.”

One of them hopped right onto Sandra with its suckers propelling, then licked her face playfully.

“Slimy little worm buddy, huh?” Max chuckled.

Another one of its kind then looked at Max, panting with its tongue sticking out happily. Its tail shook rapidly with stars glowing around it.

“Oh no, don’t you do what you’re going to do!” Max stuttered.

It then propelled itself with its own suckers right onto Max and proceeded to lick his face too.

“Yuck, I just took a shower.” Max laughed.

“They love you.” Sandra followed.

—

Celljoy opened up his eyes, and as he looked around, the fluffy specimen was in an unusual room.

“Did I just get kidnapped?” Celljoy thought, “Don’t tell me that hunter got out of prison and intentionally sought revenge...”

As Celljoy got up, he woke up his friend to wake up as well. Its eyes also open up before getting up.

“Where are we?” Budsof asked, “We were just outside before, now we’re inside of some place.”

“I don’t know,” Celljoy replied, “I think we have gotten gassed out. In other words, we’re kidnapped.”

Then a voice came out of nowhere, “Don’t be afraid guys, I hope I didn’t mean to knock you out with some gas.”

Celljoy ran behind Budsof once again, shaking.

“Who’s there?” Celljoy said, shaking.

“Yeah, show yourself.” Budsof followed.

As it walked out of the shadow, a familiar face showed up. It was the same calmsnug they saw

after they got outside of the poolhouse. But it now had a hat on its head that read “Post Office”.

“Don’t be scared, it was just me.” It said, “I ain’t here to hurt you whatsoever."

“Phew, I thought I was kidnapped.” Budsof chuckled.

“I agree, but I would have prayed gracefully to make sure if I was alright.” Celljoy said, “At least I didn’t hit too hard on the ground.”

“Hehe, I just wanted to bring you guys here.” The Calmsnug said.

“That’s ok, where do you work also?” Budsof replied, smiling.

“I work at a postal service here,” It replied, “It isn’t really perfect, but I am glad that a couple of creatures here helped set up a service for them and the humans. This place also serves as a way for anyone to come inside from the cold.”

“I can tell, it feels cozy here.” Celljoy said, “Have you watched any of my kind doing carolling in many forests? They love to sing both Christmas

carols and hymns – it's their way of thanking the Lord for bringing them into this world."

"Yep, I had seen many." Calmsnug replied, "I did see more than just the forests, and they had been very welcoming and calming, even with the songs they sang."

"I know at this point that many of the creatures are spending time and having fun at the many homemade places they created." Budsof said.

Celljoy took a look at the many boxes that inhabit the room, it looked pretty messy but at least it was better than an empty room.

"What do you do with the mailing business here?" Celljoy asked.

"I usually am the one that is the deliverer." Calmsnug replied, "Usually I ship packages that any creatures have crafted and built, and also deliver packages that humans received to us. It's small, sure. But it has been fun, especially during this holiday."

"That's great." Celljoy said softly, "You're doing His good work by serving those that you care for."

“Thanks, I needed some of those words to keep my head up.” Calmsnug said as it blushed. “I don’t want to be let down whenever I bring any creations to other creatures or humans.”

“To be honest, I am glad many Criakins create their own crafts for others.” Celljoy said, “I am not much into the money myself, I just like to craft the items to make people smile. Same with my bud next to me.”

“I agree, I was the one who made a statue of me, alongside Budchest.” Budsof said.

“That’s nice to hear, I could go and see Sandra to tell her for you.” Calmsnug said, “Though if you want it to be a surprise, I don’t mind.”

“That’s honestly a better idea.” Celljoy chuckled, “Say, if you want, whenever you’re done with the duty, wanna join Sandra for a Christmas party?”

“Oh nice! I can join as I would have enough time after I am done with my delivery duty.” Calmsnug said.

Calmsnug then gave Celljoy and Budsof group hugs together, soft and squishy like a stress ball.

“You’re free to join anytime.” Budsof said.

“I agree, Sandra is allowing anyone to join the party.” Celljoy replied.

“Thank you all so much, I’ll still be on delivery duty for now., but I will get to her party as soon as possible.” Calmsnug said.

“Well I gotta be going now, we can’t be late.” Celljoy said, “See you later!”

They all waved to each other as they went to a hallway, which was partially lit with some fragments of crystals placed inside some jars, hanging on some strings.

“It’s pretty dark, isn’t it?” Celljoy asked.

“Did you bring any light with you?” Budsof asked.

Celljoy looks around in his hidden pocket, where he eventually finds his pocket flashlight. As he

turned it on in a dark area, something popped right at them.

“YAHHH!” Both shrieked.

As they peeked their eyes, it was the same budchest once again. It laughed afterwards, realizing it was all a little harmless prank.

“B-Budchest, what are you doing?” Celljoy stuttered.

“Don’t be afraid, I was trying to do a prank on you.” Budchest giggled, “But you kind of ruined that, hehe.”

“You almost s-scared us.” Budsof stuttered next, shaking more than his companion.

“I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to scare you unintentionally.” Budchest frowned.

They stopped shaking and gave the creature a hug.

“I forgive you.” Celljoy softly comforted, “My Heavenly Father knows you mean no harm to us. He’s got your back, no matter what.”

“Thanks…” Budchest sniffed.

“C’mon, let’s come and get something to eat, shall we?” Budsof said softly.

Budchest nodded before they all went into the cafe, some creatures were occupied, filling up some of the tables. Eventually they find one they could sit alongside some of the other lifeforms.

“Oh hello, what’s up little blob?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“Hey, who are you all?” The blob asked.

“I’m Budsof, the small one is Budchest and the one next to me is Celljoy.” Budsof replied.

“Cool, my name is Algaeblob.” It said, “The friends next to me are both flurakins, Strawberry Fire and Star Pineapple.”

Both flurakins were sitting flat on the ground since they can't really float at all in the air, sitting right next to algaeblob. The former resembled a strawberry with bright red flames, but the shape doesn’t resemble the same fruit. Instead, its body was oval and spiky like a durian fruit, but it has

leaves on top with a stem. And its arms are long with a dark green color.

But the latter is even stranger. Its shape is identical to a prickly pear, but with a fruity flesh in its center, shaped like a star. But the colors around its unusual body still have the pineapple look, complete with its texture of yellows and light orange. Both of them have halos around their heads, identifying their pure innocent nature.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you.” Strawberry Fire said.

“Thanks, before me and my friend will go back to Janesboro for a party, I’m going to have a little bite.” Celljoy said.

“A party? Nice!” Star Pineapple said, “I’m just here with my friends, hoping we’ll have some hot chocolate and ginger-bread cookies.”

“Oh and about the flames on my body, it’ll not burn you.” Strawberry Fire said, “It won’t hurt you whatsoever.”

“Well uh, I don’t want to risk that.” Budsof giggled, “Hehe, I don’t want to burn my hands like cookies.”

They all laughed hysterically, some slamming their hands on the table because they couldn't control their own laughter. It almost caused them trouble, but they eventually controlled themselves eventually.

"Now where was I?" Strawberry Fire said, "Oh yeah, there's really nothing wrong about feeling the cool flames around my body. I chilled around with Star Pineapple without any problems with it."

"Ha ha, don't mind about my friend Budsof," Celljoy giggled, "My friend has a silly nature. He is a little softie."

"And a bundle of joy!" Budsof said.

As they continued their conversation, a flowermoth came flying in to see them. Its wing pattern was beautiful, yet can cause some breeze whenever it fluttered as hard as possible.

"Hey guys, what do you wanna eat tonight?" Flowermoth asked, smiling.

"Ooh ooh ooh, I wanna have some pineapple pizza and hot chocolate." Star Pineapple said.

Strawberry Fire suspiciously looked at the flurakin with a tense cringe.

“Uhh, that’s kind of weird.” Strawberry Fire sighed, “You want to have some pineapple pizza, yet you’re a pineapple yourself.”

“Oof, that’s rough buddy.” Budsof chuckled awkwardly.

“I don’t mind because eating pineapples gives off a sweet scent around me.” Star Pineapple said.

“Well anyways, what are you doing in the meantime?” Strawberry Fire asked.

“I’ll also have some chow before we go tonight.” Budsof said.

“Guys, you know I am here right?” Budchest asked.

They chuckled wholeheartedly.

“I’ll have some chocolate shakes and probably some chicken sandwiches. And maybe some

turkey sandwiches for the others too.” Budchest said.

“Good choice.” Algaeblob said.

“And I’ll have some chocolate milkshakes too, and a chicken caesar salad?” Celljoy asked.

“I love that salad.” Budsof said, sticking his tongue out in delight.

“Those are great choices, I’ll serve you all soon.” Flowermoth said.

“Before you go, I wanna say that we’re going to Sandra’s party at Janesboro. Do you think you wanna join us later?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“I’d appreciate the offer, sure!” Flowermoth said.

The flowermoth then flew right into the kitchen, while they continued their conversation. It took around 30 to 40 minutes at best. But once the time was up, the same flowermoth came out and gave the food to Celljoy, Budsof, budchest, algaeblob, Strawberry Fire and Star Pineapple flurakins.

They ended up having a nice dinner with their blessings, where they couldn't help but have a fun time together. It was the most fun since the one time when Noah got buried in a sea of cudflies in the sanctuary years ago. As both Celljoy and Budsof got up from the table, the former checked its time via a timewatch.

"It's 8 PM, we gotta go now." Celljoy said.

"It was a fun time to be with you guys, hope you can come over to see us at Sandra's party soon." Budsof said.

"We all hope so, merry Christmas to you guys. God bless you both!" Algaeblob said.

"See you all." Flowermoth said.

As they walked out of the cafe, they found an exit and as both friends walked out, Celljoy and Budsof were back outside in the snow-covered hill and forest.

The night sky was glittering with stars when they went back onto the snow, so happy, so exhilarated from such a fun time, that their joy was likely to burst like fireworks.

“Can’t you believe they were kind?” Budsof said, “And the fact that both flurakins looked like strange fruit?”

“True, but we should not judge them as we care for anyone regardless of their appearance.” Celljoy replied.

“That’s true, sorry about that hehe.” Budsof giggled.

Celljoy then looked at what paper it was shown next door, there was an image of a feline-like being on top, surrounded by text at the bottom:

“**WANTED**

If you have seen this creature, I want you to go find it and give it to me because he’s my missing pet :)

From Dr. Ral - Reward $700”

“Who’s that feline?” Budsof asked.

“Looks like Polgo to me.” Celljoy replied, “I

guess someone's looking for him. Say, do you know which direction we should go? I just hope we're not far away from home."

Budsof started thinking but couldn't think which direction well. It shook a few times, trying to come up with a good direction but struggled.

"I wish I was this smart in directions," Budsof sighed, "I tried to think which direction we could go, but my mind is now blank as a void."

They continued to look around, hoping to figure out which direction leads them to Janesboro, but the forest they looked at was just as filled with many trees that it seemed to be difficult.

Somehow, a pink glow shone above them and as both looked up, an amorflow came down to see them.

"Amorflow?" Celljoy said, "Oh can you help us?"

"I can help you, Angelheart told me from the heavens about you guys having a difficult time trying to find a direction home, right?" Amorflow asked.

“Yes, we have no clue which direction leads us back to Janesboro.” Celljoy sighed, “We’re lost in a sea of trees.”

“It’s all good, I’ll help you with His grace.” Amorflow said, “It should be over there.”

Both Celljoy and Budsof looked at the direction the angelic creature was pointing at, a trail that was untouched by snow was on one other side of the forest.

This surprised them, “How did we even miss that?” Celljoy thought.

“Thank you so much, I thought we were truly lost.” Celljoy said.

“You’re welcome, I’d serve for the lord above to help out any lost lifeform and human, so they can find their way back home.” Amorflow said softly.

“That’s really sweet of you,” Budsof said back, “I’m glad to have you around in any kind of situation. I hope we’ll be blessed with the love from above.”

“And I hope you’ll be abundantly blessed during this delightful and beautiful season.” Amorflow said.

They both now walked into the trail, as the sweet amorflow finally went back up and vanished with the pink glow.

—

Back at Sandra’s large house, many lifeforms finally came around to participate in the party. Sandra was delighted to meet her old friends once again while Max couldn’t help but get licked by more and more starvelvets.

The large orange and yellow-striped velvet worm organisms couldn’t resist their blue tongues licking the human’s face. Eventually, despite the disgust he had initially when they came around the first time, he has gotten comfortable with the lifeforms, even as far as having his arm snuggling around the organism’s wiggly and squishy long body.

“You see, I told you they love you.” Calmsnug said.

“Hehe, I have gotten used to it.” Max giggled.

Many bananails were in one section of the large living room, crawling and sticking around one of the walls to place the glass Christmas bulbs and decorations around her small tree. The light reflecting onto the bulbs was nothing short of magical.

“I do hope Celljoy and Budsof make it on time, even if I have all night to do this.” Sandra said.

“I am confident,” Calmsnug said, “By the grace of the father,, I’ll pray for their safety. After all, Celljoy loves to celebrate Christmas together with all of us.”

As the lifeforms continued enjoying their time, the front door opened up, where dozens and dozens of cudflies came in and offered everyone healthy pastries. Its fluffy icing came in many colors, such as pink, red, green, gold and blue. It was a delightful surprise for many who were feeling hungry for a little treat before suppertime.

“Here’s a little treat, Sandra.” One cudfly said.

“Thanks, Max would have one but he’s occupied at the moment.” Sandra said.

“Say, where’s Celljoy and Budsof?” It asked.

“Well they’re coming back home to join the party.” Sandra said, “I hope the Lord takes care of them well as they make it here in time.”

Chapter Three

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

Proverbs 17:17 (BSB)

Despite the efforts that the heavenly amorflow provided them, both Celljoy and Budsof ended up getting distracted by anything. One time, they were watching a group of sea otters cuddling each other in the river peacefully, and another when they almost got too close to a bear, thanks to Budsof's curiosity with wildlife.

When they reached out of the forest, they ended up going to a hill, which had a large view of yet another forest. It feels like it will last forever if they cannot reach Janesboro.

“I think there’s something wrong,” Celljoy sighed, “I think we’re lost now. I think Amorflow had no clue where it would lead to.”

“Uh, I hope you’re not blaming an angel for that.” Budsof chuckled.

“I wasn’t going to blame him,” Celljoy laughed, “We’re both goofy creatures and I lack good knowledge when it comes to getting back home.”

“That’s a shame, guess I’m not alone then?” Budsof asked, smiling.

“No worries, as long as we’re faithful bosom friends, we can get through this.” Celljoy said, “Say, do you think it would be nice if we ever make more friends with your kind somewhere else?”

“That would be nice,” Budsof said, “Though I wouldn’t want to cause any violence at all, especially as I don’t tolerate it. It’s honestly cruel to see someone fight with another person.”

“You’re not alone, I remembered the time when Noah was beating the pulp out of the hunter years ago, and realizing that he was going to kill Chet

with the sword, I decided to prevent Noah from doing so.” Celljoy said.

Budsof frowned and began hugging the fluffy criakin.

“I think you did what’s right, the Heavenly Father would be happy because you made the right decision and prevented conflict.” Budsof comforted.

Celljoy smiled softly, a tear came out before patting the bud on its head calmly.

“I think you’re a good friend honestly.” Celljoy said, “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome,” Budsof said back.

The fluffy eared creature then began finding what idea he could use to get them to Janesboro sooner, better now than never. Images danced in his mind, including one idea where Celljoy could use a large hot-air balloon from somewhere, but that sounded outlandish for two reasons.

One was that it was hard to find, especially since it was winter, and the second, they wouldn’t reach

their designation without running out of fuel that is required to use for a hot-air balloon. So Celljoy shook his head and continued thinking with some more ideas. Budsof was now staring at him, puzzling on what his friend was doing.

“Oh wait, I have a wonderful idea!” Celljoy joyfully exclaimed.

“What wonderful idea?” Budsof asked.

“I could call on Bunmoth and Butterbun from the heavens with a horn Angelheart gave me.” Celljoy said, “They’ll help us get close to our direction sooner.”

“You’re a genius, Celljoy!” Budsof jumped delightfully.

“Thanks, now I gotta search for it.” Celljoy said.

As his pink hands grabbed the backpack that he had around him, he then opened it up and searched around carefully. It took a few seconds but eventually, they found the horn in all its golden glory.

“This is the horn used for communication for Bunmoth and Butterbun.” Celljoy said, “It was a gift from Angelheart. If I use this, they’ll get us to a place that will lead us to Janesboro.”

“Great, what are you waiting for buddy? Blow the horn.” Budsof joyfully said.

“Here I go!” Celljoy said.

Taking a deep breath, he then pumped his mouth into the horn’s mouthpiece and began to blow, then…

PPPPPFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF!!!

No noise came out of the horn, instead the sound of Celljoy struggling to blow the horn was audible, where his face turned deep red, almost running out of breath as the creature kept forcing the horn the sound they needed to let out. He pulled the horn right out of the fluffy specimen’s mouth and took as many breaths.

“Is there something wrong with it?” Budsof asked.

“NO!” Celljoy exclaimed, “No, it's not what you think! I can try this again, I think it can be unblocked if I try once again.”

Taking another deep breath, Celljoy put his mouth yet again into the mouthpiece and attempted to blow the horn once again…

PPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPFFFFFFFFFFFFFF!!!

His face turned red yet again, his eyes opened up wide as he struggled to let out any sound, running out of breath as Celljoy attempted blowing out the steam right into the horn’s mouthpiece. But pulling the mouthpiece away from him, Celljoy collapses on the ground and takes more breaths.

“Are you sure about this?” Budsof asked, looking concerned at his friend.

Taking more breaths, Celljoy tried to breathe out as many words as possible.

“Can… you help… figure out… what’s wrong… with the horn?” Celljoy gasped.

Passing the horn to Budsof, the leafy bud began inspecting it with careful eyes. Nothing seemed to

be wrong with the outer part of the horn so far, but that didn't stop his friend from being curious about what was causing the issue.

“Lemme see then.” Budsof said.

Digging its long leafy arms inside the horn, something suddenly was crawling on him. The bud almost flinched out in terror, but resisted as it was nothing more than a caterpillar, which was crawling out of the horn and onto its leafy arms. It looked large, but was still small compared to Budsof’s arms.

“It looks like that little caterpillar made its home inside the horn.” Budsof giggled.

“No wonder why it wasn’t even working.” Celljoy embarrassedly chuckled, “I must have scared the little larva, didn’t I?”

“I don’t think you meant that honestly.” Budsof said, “It was probably just resting inside, but then again, maybe it was just my lucky guess.”

Celljoy chuckled, as the bud passed back the horn to him.

“I guess you can say that it was a miracle that Angelheart had blessed you with the grace from the heavens.” Celljoy said, “Third time’s a charm.”

Once again, taking one more deep breath, the creature puts his mouth inside the horn’s mouthpiece and begins to blow it out. This time however, it let out a majestic yet beautiful song. Budsof stared at him with amazement, while listening to the music that was coming right out of his friend’s mouth.

Finally, Celljoy then placed down the horn and smiled upward towards the starry sky.

“That was… beautiful!” Budsof said, “You must have been blessed with a wonderful, heavenly gift, I’m so proud of you!”

“Thanks, bless Him and Jesus with your heart my friend.” Celljoy said, “Look up at the sky, we’ll wait and see what comes soon after.”

Budsof joined with Celljoy, staring up at the star-filled sky that was illuminated with a moon on the right corner. It was still quiet, except with the

occasional noise of a river and the howling cries of wolves.

But as they continued to stare up, something small then illuminated downwards to them slowly. There was one pink glow, followed by a deep blue glow. As it came towards them, the large gigantic angelic beings were now in view. Their wings are larger than any other species the Lord had sent down years ago, they'd outrival any gigantic monster if starred in a movie in the country of Japan.

"Heavenly…" Budsof gasped.

"Hey Bunmoth and Butterbun, can you help us?" Celljoy asked.

"Was it you that let out the horn's call for us?" Butterbun asked, smiling as it stared at them.

"Yes, I want some help from you both." Celljoy called, "I know you're larger than me, but I need you guys to take us to a way that can hopefully lead us to Janesboro for Sandra's party."

"We can help you out with our grace in the Lord." Bunmoth said, "Hopefully we'll lead you buddies

to the right direction that can lead you both home soon."

"Sweet, this will be like a piece of bud cake!" Budsof joked, smiling alongside his friend.

"Oh buddy!" Celljoy joyfully said, patting his friend's head in return.

Bunmoth puts its fluffy large paws down for Celljoy to climb on and so did Butterbun, when it let out its large paws for Budsof to get on as well. As they got on, both heavenly creatures then began to fly off and get them to the correct path.

—

At Sandra's sparkling clean kitchen, she was preparing a big turkey on the stove. Max had obtained it before when he went to a food bank located at a church in Janesboro.

He was willing to pay for the turkey, but since the food bank allowed him to obtain the food freely alongside others who were waiting in a line, they offered the turkey freely.

After being blessed by those who gave Max the turkey, he went home and gave it to his wife Sandra. It was large, almost like one of those classic yet delicious looking turkeys seen in movies.

He went in to see his wife after adding the stuffing inside the bird, where he was smiling at her and the skills she was doing to prep up the food.

“This is going to be delicious, I can tell from how it looks.” Max said, smiling.

“I cannot wait to share it with everyone, I bet these creatures will enjoy my cooking.” Sandra said, feeling cheerful.

Calmsnug walked around to see the turkey, and so did one Starvelvet. The velvet worms’ mouth was watering from how the turkey looked while Calmsnug happily looked around its friends.

“Silly velvet worm, I can see you’re hungry.” Sandra said.

“Surkey, Surkey!” The Starvelvet yelped happily.

“I hope it won't take that long till it's done.” Calmsnug said.

“It usually takes a long time, but I hope this won’t be the case.” Sandra answered.

“Wanna know something I had remembered, Sandra?” Max asked.

“What is it?” Sandra curiously replied.

“I used to work for a movie studio far away, but they fired me because they thought I was a loser who sucked at generating ideas.” Max answered.

“You’re not an idiot.” Sandra inquired, “Aside from one time when you sent that tape to the station manager, you are not an idiot in my eyes. You’re loved no matter what.”

Both began hugging and kissing together, when a group of cudflies watched the scene a few feet away. The cudflies then flew right into Max, collapsing him down on the ground as their buzzing large wings and fluff were now covering Max from torso to feet. They all giggled around Max, while Sandra laughed.

“We all love you Max, you’re no idiot to us.” The cudflies inquired in unison.

“Sriends!” The velvet worm exclaimed.

The velvet worm organism then snuggled right in between the many cudflies and right around Max before licking his face.

“Why do you like me so much?” Max laughed.

“Smax sriend.” It said.

—

Soaring through the starry sky fifty feet off the ground, Celljoy and Budsof were resting on both Bunmoth and Butterbun as they watched below, where the vast forests underneath were in view.

“Are you sure you know where Janesboro is?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“Of course,” Bunmoth answered, “We usually see the town whenever we fly around to bless those with His majestical grace.”

“Not only we’re graceful servants, but we can also send good news as messengers.” Butterbun said, “But it’s not just that, we can also be playful to Bunmoth. Same with those who we see too, despite our large size. But that doesn’t mean we’re not soft, you can feel the fluff in the paws you both are on.”

“That explains why your fluff feels like a mix of cotton candy and teddy bears.” Budsof chuckled.

Celljoy laughed alongside, though he couldn’t help but admit that what his friend said was true.

“That’s true, but what you described was amusing.” Celljoy laughed, “One day, you should be a joyful comedian at a comedy club, bud.”

“Hm, that would be nice.” Budsof said, smiling, “To be honest, I don’t think I have ever been to a comedy club before. Is there one in Janesboro?”

“Yeah, they have a famous one where many talented residents and celebrities attend.” Celljoy answered.

As they watched further across the night sky, behind the giant beings, a pack of cudflies

suddenly swooped through, flying past Bunmoth and Butterbun's giant wings as they watched along.

"Hi Celljoy! Hi Budsof!" One cudfly said, smiling as their large butterfly wings flapped, "What are you doing at the moment?"

"Oh we're just going to a better shortcut that will lead us back home." Celljoy said.

"Sweet, I'm surprised to see you guys so far in the air." Another cudfly said.

"Yeah, if only we can fly with the wings we have." Budsof laughed.

"Maybe if we can make it back home and do more good things along the way, we may be able to fly with the wings." Celljoy said, softly chuckling back.

"Perhaps with grace and love, with the good things you can do, that may come true." Bunmoth said.

“You guys are really goofy, huh?” A cudfly said, as it began to laugh cheerfully, “Say, why are you going to Janesboro?”

“Well, my friend is having a fun Christmas party.” Budsof said, “That’s why we’re going there.”

“Perhaps all of us behind can be part of the party, is that ok with you?” Another cudfly asked.

“Of course, you’re all invited.” Celljoy answered.

The group of flying cudflies said and rejoiced happily as they all flew far away from Celljoy, Budsof, Bunmoth and Buttermoth. They all waved goodbye all while their large wings flapped faster than before.

“They’re all really sweet flying buddies, don’t you agree?” Celljoy asked, smiling.

“I couldn’t agree more.” Budsof answered.

As both large lifeforms were still flying along with Celljoy and Budsof on their paws, they realized that they’re closer to the destination.

“Here we are,” Butterbun said, “This should be the better shortcut back home for you both. Hold on.”

As both large heavenly beings slowed down their flying, they lowered down enough for Celljoy and Budsof to come down on the ground. Both jumped down and said to the beings with gratitude.

“This shouldn’t take long to get back home for Christmas, creatures.” Bunmoth said, smiling.

“I agree, both me and my friend enjoy celebrating Jesus’ birthday back up in the heavens along with the other angels.” Butterbun inquired, smiling next to Bunmoth.

“Thank you both so much, it was so kind of you.” Celljoy said.

“I agree with Celljoy my friend, it was really sweet that you both came and helped us.” Budsof said, blushing happily.

“You’re welcome!” Bunmoth said, “Merry Christmas and God bless you both.”

Both beings then flapped their gigantic wings up before turning to the night starry sky and flying away before disappearing. Celljoy and Budsof waved back as they left.

“I told you they can help us, bud.” Celljoy said. “I cannot wait to see Sandra once again.”

“I agree with you.” Budsof softly said.

“As we walk to our destination, I can recall some of my favorite poetry.” Celljoy said, “What do you think?”

“That’s something I’d appreciate, friend.” Budsof said, smiling. “I am actually interested in any poetry you say to me.”

“Glad to hear this, let’s hope it won’t derail the trip back home.” Celljoy said.

As they both began walking through the snowy trail, Celljoy placed his hands together peacefully while Budsof watched at his friend, smiling. As Celljoy looked up, he began reciting one of Shakespeare’s sonnets, being sonnet 18:

“*Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?*

Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

As he finishes up reciting the sonnet, Celljoy lifts his palms up alongside his chest as he begins to speak.

"Thank my Heavenly Father for blessing us and the humans with His grace, let's hope that our travels will be smooth sailing-"

Suddenly and without warning, Celljoy almost tripped as he stumbled out of nowhere. Budsof pulled his friend away from what appeared to be a hole, but as he did, the weight of his body was a bit too much for them and there, they plummeted

down into a hole and crashed into a darkening area.

“I think we’d just derailed indefinitely…” Budsof groaned, trying to get back up from the ground.

“Man, I wished I had watched carefully if I hadn’t been distracted by what I was saying.” Celljoy sighed, “If I had watched, we wouldn’t have fallen into this stupendously dense hole."

A voice then rang out close to them, “Silence.”

Celljoy yelped in terror, wanting to duck again behind Budsof, but resisted as to not make his friend fall back down on the ground.

“W-Who’s that?” Celljoy said, trembling on his bare feet.

“I don’t even know what that is,” Budsof said, shaking. “We can’t see in this hole, it’s all pitch black.”

Despite the fact they couldn’t see in the dark, all they could see though was a pair of eyes that were glowing right in front of them.

“Who are you, stranger?” The voice asked.

“Do I really have to answer anyone’s question on who we are?” Celljoy sighed, “I’m Celljoy and my friend next to me is Budsof.”

“Show yourself.” Budsof said.

As the bud said those words, a light then shone on the being. It was like nothing they had ever seen before. It had a blue body that’s short and sweet, with an oval head and small body with arms and legs. Its three whiskers on each side of its face, as well as the strain of long hair on top of its head, were long and as blue as its body. It also had a bowtie and two large pink ears with star patterns on it. It’s like a small gremlin, yet cuter.

“Greetings new friends, I am a furry little grempom and a leader.” It said.

Both Celljoy and Budsof were astonished at what they saw right in front of their eyes.

“I’m starting to question myself honestly.” Celljoy said, “I don’t know why I got frightened in the first place.”

“There’s no need to be worried, I’m part of a friendly tribe, a tribe of lifeforms.” The grempom said.

Then a hole suddenly opened up beneath an area behind the creature, where it lightened up the area more. But more lights (lightened up by solluxes) turned on, revealing more creatures behind it. It looked more of a paradise, especially from below the ground, almost similar to their criakin sanctuary back at Janesboro.

“Now to think of it, this is somehow less scary.” Budsof chuckled.

“You’re right, it's something you both may like whenever you guys are cold from outside.” One creature said. It resembled a large land snail, but with a chocolate exterior and smell.

“That’s sweet, but I’m not that cold because of my fluff and jacket.” Celljoy said, softly smiling.

“I actually have one question, Celljoy, what are those holes that are opened up above the ceiling?” Budsof asked.

Celljoy looked up, large holes at the ceiling, revealing a starry sky, lighting up the underground area alongside the other solluxes.

“Could these holes be for any other entrances?” Celljoy asked back, “But if that can be true, does anyone provide homemade stairs or ladders for them to come down?”

“We do, and you’re right.” The grempom answered, “Though it can also be used for some lighting whenever we don’t need any lights during the daytime.”

“That’s fascinating, you guys must have gotten a gift that was blessed to you like all of us to come up with some creative skills.” Celljoy said, smiling. “Anyway, my bud and I are going back to Janesboro for Christmas.”

“That’s nice, are we invited?” the grempom asked, smiling back.

“Anyone’s invited to join Sandra’s party and it’s free.” Budsof answered.

“Can I join?” The chocolate snail asked.

“Me too?” Another asked, one resembling a fluffy eared sheep with purple skin, arms and legs, wings and halo.

“Me three?” A flurakin asked, resembling a cloud that’s jumping on the ground, containing two columns of colorful pink clouds surrounding a cherry on top.

“Of course!” Celljoy said, smiling and waving its arms happily, “You’re all free to join as well, Sandra would be pleasantly surprised by the vast majority of what the Lord had created, including you all. No one should be alone on Christmas whatsoever.”

“Thank you guys so much.” The grempom said, blushing, “I appreciate you both allowing us to join.”

“You’re welcome.” Celljoy said.

“Say the reason why I am with some creatures around now, it’s because many grempoms had a vacation with other lifeforms during Christmas, so I was alone.” The grempom chuckled, “This is the reason why I brought some creatures to hang

around with. I have a funny little idea in mind, we should practice doing some acting for fun."

"Sounds like a great idea," Celljoy said, "But what kind of performance could I do for you guys?"

Celljoy began thinking about it, struggling with what ideas he could use. He juggled around in his mind, searching for some genius comedy ideas.

"Maybe something that's from a certain funny cartoon?" Budsof asked, "Like those old humorous cartoons from back in the day?"

"You know, that's not such a bad idea after all." Celljoy replied, smiling. "You just saved me time from trying to find ideas on my own."

"I usually watch some funny cartoons on TV with you and other lifeforms back at Janesboro." Budsof said. "Whenever something funny happens to a character on screen, it's a riot. A laugh riot."

"I agree! Laughter is the best medicine, right? I have a funny idea in mind." Celljoy said, smiling.

"Sure, do your best Celljoy." The grempom said.

Clearing his throat, Celljoy looked at the creatures straight ahead as he began speaking something that would end up being disastrous.

“Say ah.” Celljoy softly said.

As he did, the grempom then screamed so loud that gusts of breeze were now blowing at the fluffy-eared lifeform. Celljoy’s large ears were now being filled with the winds the creature was emitting out of. Perhaps it was some sort of a wind machine they got from someone else?

“Be quiet!” Celljoy yelled.

“I thought you wanted me to say ah.” The grempom said, frowning.

“Yes that’s exactly what I said, but I didn’t expect you to say…” Celljoy said.

He then screamed as loud as grempom did, which caused the latter to yell too. It was like a battle, as both of their breaths were blowing from their mouths with the breeze.

It went on until the cloudy cherry flurakin started freaking out. The lifeform then jumped high

enough to reach the roof and grabbed one of the solluxes and held it in between the battling winds from Celljoy and the grempom.

In an instant, the reaction from their gusts and Sollux being in between, caused the area to explode with smoke expelling out. They were all knocked out to the ground as the smoke spread out of the holes and into the snow-filled ground and starry skies. As they get back up, they're all covered with ash and dust.

"On second thought, I don't think we should have done that." Celljoy said, coughing out the smoke.

"My back." The sollux groaned.

"Sorry about that, I couldn't help that." The flurakin sighed.

"Maybe I shouldn't have screamed out loud. Maybe we can come up with a better idea instead?" The grempom asked, coughing out some more smoke.

"Good idea." Budsof groaned, "That way, we wouldn't have to get knocked out to the ground again."

“Yeah, I almost felt like I was going to turn into a chocolate milkshake. Heh heh…” The snail joked.

They all looked at the snail with shocked expressions. The chocolatey snail couldn’t help but feel embarrassed at what he said.

“T-that was a joke.” The snail said, stuttering. “I swear I didn’t mean to offend you all.”

Chapter Four

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Psalms 119:105 (BSB)

At Janesboro, two of the pastors came around to visit Sandra. One who documented the lifeforms with his notebook after he was encountered by a calmsnug, and the other who sensed it was a divine gift. Their names were Don and Dustin.

"Hello guys, I hope you both are willing to join in for the party." Sandra said calmly, smiling.

"Yeah, I'd appreciate it." Don said, as he hugged the woman.

As the two pastor friends both went inside Sandra's large house, the creatures (who were having a good time) waved hello. Some of the

starvelvets came around, hopping and circling around them with their suckers propelling from their underbellies.

“It’s great to see you guys again, I hope you’re all enjoying this cheerful party during the holidays.” Don said, smiling.

When Don sat around alongside Dustin, the lifeforms weren’t hesitant to provide them some space to sit on the couch.

“Calmsnug, I just published my book to the press.” Don explained. “All the cataloging of the lifeforms I have put together and documented. I hope it will become a best seller. If not, I don’t mind if it doesn't sell that many copies.”

“That’s ok, it's better to be humble and not focus on the profits.” Calmsnug cheerfully said, “It’s about putting it together with passion and effort for anyone to enjoy, no matter what.”

Sandra couldn’t help but feel the warmth and joy inside her. It was like the presence of not just the Holy Spirit, but God’s comforting presence, wrapping her in peace like a warm blanket on a cold night.

But she was feeling concerned about Celljoy and Budsof. She was now looking out the window, hoping to see them arrive soon.

“I’m worried they’ll never come in time.” Sandra sighed.

She went outside into the cold, chilly night, and looked up in the air. This caught the attention of some of the lifeforms, including the calmsnug, and they all went out to see what’s wrong with their friend.

“Are you okay?” Calmsnug asked, a look of concern on his face.

“I am, but I’m worried that two of my friends won’t come soon.” Sandra said sadly.

Calmsnug started thinking a bit, while some starvelvets looked up at the woman, concerned. The velvet worm organisms then started rubbing their head onto her legs and hands, snuggling up to the point that she hugged them back.

“Perhaps the star of Bethlehem could lead them here?” Calmsnug suggested hopefully.

“That would be nice, but how will that happen?” Sandra asked.

Calmsnug then looked up at the starry sky and began to pray.

“Dear Father, can you help my friends Celljoy and Budsof find their way back home with the star of Bethlehem, showing them the way?” Calmsnug prayed, “I can’t help but feel bad for Sandra, seeing her worried for their safety. Help them get here soon. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.”

—

Meanwhile, far away, Celljoy and Budsof were still in the underground area that the other creatures (including the grempom) reside in.

They were still thinking of a comedy performance idea, leading to many of them raising their hands and saying their own ideas. Many of them were genius but it was nothing compared to Budsof, when he thought up a silly idea of imitating a classic cartoon involving a rabbit and a duck being hunted.

“It’s grempom season!” Celljoy said.

“Celljoy season!” The grempom shot back.

They continued shooting back the same lines as they ripped off a piece of paper on a prop tree log. Eventually one other piece of paper was different, it had the text “BUDSOF SEASON”. They then looked at their friend manically.

“Uh oh…” Budsof whimpered.

Speeding off as fast as possible, Celljoy and the grempom then walked slowly as they were still looking at the direction of where Budsof sped away to.

“Be very quiet, we’re now hunting Budsof.” Celljoy whispered.

“Ha ha ha ha ha!” The grempom laughed.

As the performance came to an end, the other lifeforms applauded them cheerfully.

“Thank you all so much for enjoying our performance.” Celljoy said, smiling.

Budsof walked back on the stage, cheerfully smiling as he stared at his friends.

“That was so much fun, we should do that again next time.” Budsof said, hopping joyfully. “Good thing I came up with that, maybe I should become a comedian some day.”

“I hope that will go well, bud.” The grempom said, smiling. “It’s better though to practice your comedy chops before going on stage.”

“I agree, though right now, we have to go if that’s ok with you.” Celljoy said, “Though I’ll look forward to seeing you and your friends at the Christmas party in Janesboro.”

“Don’t forget me buddy.” Budsof called.

As they both walked off the stage, Celljoy and Budsof waved goodbye to the creatures living there, and emerged from the hole they fell into via a handcrafted ladder. But once they came out and continued their journey, they noticed that the grempom was following close behind.

“Oh, what are you doing at the moment?” Celljoy asked, “I thought you’re going there after.”

“Of course, I only wanted to tell you guys that if you ever see a group of fluffy yet friendly flying creatures, tell them I said hi for me and inform them about the party.” The grempom said, “I just love seeing them in the wild, especially since they’re not only fluffy and huggable, but they’re helpful and kind.”

“You mean cudflies?” Celljoy curiously asked, smiling back.

“Yes those ones, they helped out using resources wisely to build up natural gardens in the forests, and even helped with other grempoms to build up the underground area we reside in.” The grempom replied.

“That’s sweet of them, they must be really helpful.” Budsof cheerfully said.

“I know what you mean about the natural gardens, I have seen those back at the forests in Janesboro a lot.” Celljoy inquired.

“Those Cudflies helped all of the grempoms, including me, build each of the rooms inside our home underground with a good and generous

amount of dirt and wood. They also used some special type of cement that they made with their saliva." The grempom continued, "Also about what happened before when you guys fell, I want to apologize about that. Maybe a sign could work next to the hole, to make sure no one would accidentally fall down when walking around the vast forest, what do you think?"

"I forgive you, little friend." Celljoy softly said, "Plus I think that is a really good idea. That or a door can help indefinitely."

"Thanks." The grempom said.

As it smiled back at the two, he lifted his arms up for a hug. Celljoy came over and hugged the lifeform gently and calmly, smiling back at it. Budsof watched at the wholesome scene, smiling yet shedding a tear.

"Well I gotta get ready for the party then, I wish you good luck on the way back home." The grempom said, smiling.

"Take care friend, see you next time!" Budsof said.

“Merry Christmas, little grempom! God bless you!” Celljoy said back.

The creature waved goodbye as they left and continued their trail back home. Celljoy then spotted a star, albeit more cross shaped and brighter than any other star in the sky.

“That has to be the star of Bethlehem.” Celljoy said. “Maybe this will lead us back home.”

“Excellent, we just gotta focus on the star and perhaps we’ll be safe.” Budsof cheerfully said.

Their journey however, wasn’t over yet. They had to endure more humorous yet wholesome moments, helping out some wildlife such as raccoons and squirrels generously with what they found, mainly food like nuts.

And as they walked out of the vast forest, they were now out of the area, but the star was still in front of their eyes, centered as they continued their journey. As they walked along, Both Celljoy and Budsof then suddenly saw something else entirely, a pack of their own kind carolling as they watched the sky together.

“Isn’t this wonderful?” Celljoy softly asked.

The many Celljoys and Budsofs came in various colors as they were standing together with their hands up together. All of them were singing Silent Night together calmly and peacefully as their hearts were feeling the warmth, even in the cold freezing night.

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
‘Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

As they continued singing in harmony, both Celljoy and Budsof, far away from their kind, were watching peacefully with tears. It was such a beautiful performance to watch. Celljoy closed his eyes and just let the warmth in his heart take over alongside his bud.

There were many squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons and other animals who were observing the group with curiosity, Budsof looked back and noticed it wasn’t focusing on him or his friend, it was focusing instead on the carolling group.

“Can you believe this? Those cute animals are looking at them. They know it’s beautiful. Don’t you agree?” Budsof asked.

“That’s sweet, I agree with you too.” Celljoy replied.

“It's like both of them are in pure harmony together.” Budsof softly spoke, “Like a living Christmas card.”

“I can’t help but agree with you friend.” Celljoy said, smiling.

Budsof then looked around the view, when he suddenly noticed a fungal-looking lifeform watching the same group on the left side.

“Who’s that over there?” Budsof asked.

“I have no idea,” Celljoy replied, “It looks like some sort of an unusual explorer watching them. Should we go over there and check it out?”

"If you want, of course." Budsof cheerfully said, "But you don't want to disrupt the caroling with our shouts."

Budsof laughed softly, Celljoy patted the bud on its head as it smiled at his friend.

“I don’t think there’s anything to worry about buddy, as long as we’re quiet of course.” Celljoy said.

They began walking close to the creature softly and slowly, hoping not to startle it by their voices. As they got closer, they began waving their arms.

“Hey explorer, we come in peace.” Budsof said.

As the creature looked behind, it looked at Celljoy and Budsof curiously before waving its long arms back at them.

“Hey friends!” It cheerfully said, “I’m Shroomie, an aurivella from a planet far away. I just came here to explore and observe the lifeforms I see here. I know you two, you’re part of both species, right?”

“Yes, you must have seen our kind carolling like we had.” Celljoy said.

“Yep, I just like being curious and exploring the landscapes here.” Shroomie said, “Seeing your kind in the wild is really rewarding, especially with you two. But I’m not only an explorer, but I’m also both an adventurer and artist.”

Budsof then fell asleep and snuggled up beside his friend.

“Sweet!” Celljoy said, “Have you been drawing lately?”

“Yep, I wanted to know a lot more about the world around me.” Shroomie replied, “Whenever I share my drawings and sketches to those I see, they get so happy. Their eyes sparkle with delight and joy that they hug me as much as I do. That’s why I cannot stop exploring, same with drawing. In fact, I just drew something for a certain Celljoy, would that be ok if I give it to you?”

“A gift… for me?” Celljoy asked, “That is honestly really kind of you.”

“You’re welcome friend, here it is!” Shroomie replied.

As it grabbed out the drawing, showing it to

Celljoy, it looked amazing with a good amount of shading and attention to detail, including the excess amount of fluff and shiny heart on its tuff.

“Wow, that’s beautiful!” Celljoy said, “Thank you so much, Shroomie.”

Celljoy hugged the explorer joyfully, where she hugged him back in return.

“You’re welcome, thanks for the hugs too.” Shroomie said. “Though I have to mention that I am not always too skilled as an artist myself. I always try my very best regardless.”

“No worries, that’s what matters the most.” Celljoy replied, “We all try our very best, especially with the blessings we receive.”

“I also want to mention that I did a drawing for Budsof too.” Shroomie said back, “I just hope he likes it as I wanted to get every detail of how it looked accurately.”

Budsof wakes up from the slumber after hearing what Shroomie said, its eyes lit up like stars before it hopped with joy.

“Did you say that you drew something for me?” Budsof joyfully asked.

“Yep, here it is!” Shroomie replied.

Holding up the drawing to the bud, it looked spot on from what it looked. Its fluffy body contrasted with the green leaf aesthetic of its bottom half. It looked puzzled as one of its leafy arms was up around its face. But it was still cute enough that it made Budsof snuggle up with Celljoy with joy.

“I look so cute in there!” Budsof giggled joyfully.

Celljoy snuggled alongside the bud, “I know right? Also we’re going to a party at Janesboro, are you interested to join?”

“Wowie, I’d be glad to join you there.” Shroomie said, “Going to the party means more observations of the creatures in there.”

“Oh by the way, we want to thank you for the drawings also.” Celljoy said, blushing. “Would you frame them up for me at Sandra’s home?”

“Of course, I’d be happy to do that for you guys.” Shroomie replied, “You guys are really sweet, thanks.”

“No problem, but the game’s afoot now.” Budsof said, “We gotta get there and follow the star of Bethlehem before it's too late. Take care Shroom!”

Waving goodbye to the mushroom, it then waved back at the two as well.

“See you both there, friends!” Shroomie said.

As they continued on their way, Budsof then noticed a large cave hidden behind the trees. His curiosity got the better of him and trailed off to see it.

“Budsof, what are you doing?” Celljoy asked.

“We gotta see what this cave is. Come on!” Budsof replied.

“But what if there is something dangerous in there? Hold up.” Celljoy asked back.

He ran to catch up with Budsof and followed him inside the large cave. It was dark inside, which

caused Celljoy to look for some small flashlights inside his pockets. Sandra gave him the flashlights in case he needed to see in the dark, so it was perfect for him to use in any situation.

As he grabbed out the flashlights, he passed one onto Budsof as he turned his on. It was huge with large spikes hanging on the ceiling, almost like it was from another dimension or something. And somehow there were some finger paintings on the rocky walls as they turned to the walls.

“Perhaps some human drew these here one time?” Celljoy whispered.

“Uh… C-celljoy…” Budsof stuttered, “I think you have got to look down…”

As he did, Celljoy noticed piles of bones that were laying on the rocky ground. Feeling concerned, he tried to get Budsof away, assuming it was a trap.

Celljoy whispered back to his friend, “I think we gotta get back, but we must be quiet or-”

His barefoot landed on one of the bones and accidentally cracked it, and without warning, roars

came out from the cave and a pack of pumas charged right at them.

“Oh d-dang!” Budsof stuttered.

“Run!” Celljoy yelled.

They both ran out of the cave as fast as possible. The pumas roared ferociously, almost as loud as tigers, as they sped up with their powerful legs and paws, charging up close to them.

“Why in the world are there mountain lions in the area?” Budsof asked.

“I have no idea, maybe they're native to Canada?” Celljoy joked, all the while, the pumas were following them both with breakneck speed.

“There’s no time to joke around like this, this is serious.” Budsof stuttered.

“Maybe if I can pray, the Lord could lead us a way to hide.” Celljoy said.

He would pray, but with the looming threat of the mountain lions’ sharp teeth and bone breaking force, there was no time to do so.

“Maybe we could go to some bushes?” Budsof asked, his breaths shortened.

“Good idea!” Celljoy replied, “Any bush is better than nothing, I don’t want those pumas to ruin my scarf or jacket with their claws.”

As they did so, they went far into the forest, searching for a large enough bush for them to hide. The pumas were not that far away from them, but eventually after a few minutes of tense suspension, Celljoy and Budsof found a large shady bush that was large enough to hide away from. It was a bushlump they found, which helped them provide a safe place away from the terrifying mountain lions.

The pumas searched around but gave up and walked away. Celljoy and Budsof walked out of the large bush.

“Thanks for saving us both. I don’t know what I would have done without you honestly.” Celljoy sighed with relief.

“You’re welcome, take care guys!” Bushlump said, smiling before it went to sleep, hibernating in the cold snowy ground.

—

Back at Sandra’s party, the creatures were now waiting patiently alongside Sandra and the others. Waiting for their friends to come home soon. It was a worrisome moment now.

“What are we going to do now?” Max sighed, “What if Celljoy and Budsof got stuck in the forests and can’t find their way now?”

“There’s no need to be scared, Max.” Calmsnug said gently, “If you’re worried, that’s not from our Heavenly Father. You must keep your hopes up, my friend. Besides, the star of Bethlehem is now up around the town of Janesboro. Surely, they’ll follow the star.”

“This reminds me of the Magi, am I right?” Don chuckled, “Perhaps they got lost. But Calmsnug’s right about that, you must hold onto the hope. They’ll come back home soon.”

Suddenly, the door opened up fast, startling them out of nowhere. It was the fluffy butterfloat flurakin.

“You almost scared us all to death.” Sandra chuckled.

“Sorry about that disturbance I caused you all, I just wanted to say that I found the star of Bethlehem around here.” Butterfloat said.

“I know, I just prayed an hour ago for help,” Calmsnug said, “For our friends, Celljoy and Budsof will get back home soon.”

“Oh, can we do something while we wait?” Dustin asked.

“Of course, we could do some crafting.” The cancarrot replied, “Perhaps gifts for Celljoy and Budsof? As a way to show how much we care for them?”

“That’s a great idea!” Sandra said, smiling.

The flurakin could have stayed and joined for some crafting, but feeling a sense of worriness for

Celljoy and Budsof, it decided to fly with its wings back up, hoping to find them both.

“Oh and if you ever find them, here’s my old camera.” Sandra said, passing on the camera to the flurakin.

“Thank you! And good luck with the crafting guys, I’ll go search for them.” Butterfloat said, waving goodbye.

—

Back far away, Celljoy and Budsof were continuing their trail back as they continued focusing on the star as a way to guide them home. But as they kept their focus on it, their stomachs began growling.

“Oh no, I’m feeling hungry right now.” Celljoy groaned.

“You’re not alone honestly, same here.” Budsof replied.

Celljoy began thinking of what they should eat on their way back home. He started having thoughts of the places he had been to, where Celljoy

suddenly remembered a gas station not far from where they're going to.

"We could go to a gas station to get some ramen, what do you think?" Celljoy asked.

"Hmm… that's a great idea actually." Budsof replied, "Too bad I never had ramen before, maybe I'll like it."

Celljoy smiled at his friend before walking continuously, until they saw a certain Criakin he remembered seeing a lot. A giant millipede creature was in view, it was perfect because its long segmented body was enough for Celljoy and Budsof to go on.

"Hey crawlipede, can you give us a ride to a gas station I usually go to?" Celljoy asked.

"Sure!" It answered, smiling. "Even though I can be bumpy, I can provide you both a calming trip to the gas station."

"Thanks, both Celljoy and I are feeling hungry and that's why we gotta go there." Budsof said.

“Oh my, you guys better hop on me. It’s better to get some protein and energy if you’re going on a trip back home.” The crawlipede inquired.

“Thanks, you’re a lifesaver! I wanna tell you this honestly, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Celljoy said.

They both got on the bumpy segments of the millipede's body, and as they did, the lifeform began to crawl on the ground. As Celljoy provided the directions to the gas station, he felt a sense of comfort and relief with the Holy Spirit surging peacefully in him.

“If you ever see that stoppette one day, tell her I said hello if that’s ok?” The crawlipede asked.

“Of course, I don’t think I have ever seen Stopette before, hehe.” Budsof giggled.

As with each step from the crawlipede’s hundred legs, the trip was swell, short and sweet. And when they did finally arrive at the gas station, they got off of the millipede and waved goodbye.

“Bless you, thank you for helping us get to a gas

station.” Celljoy said, petting the crawlipede’s head with his hands.

“You too as well, may the creator’s grace abundantly bless you too.” The crawlipede said, smiling before it left crawling away.

“What a nice chap.” Budsof inquired, smiling back at his friend.

Once Celljoy and Budsof went inside the gas station, it was lit up brightly with some music. They felt a sense of relief and peace as they walked around and looked at the aisles. Once they found the ramen section at one part of the aisles, they picked what flavor they liked before going to the checkout.

“What can I do for you both?” A cancarrot asked.

“Cancarrot? You’re working here at a gas station at this time?” Celljoy asked.

“Yep, though I am part of its kind. So you guys want some ramen?” The cancarrot asked.

“Yea, though I don’t have any allowance with me. I just realized that.” Celljoy chuckled.

Celljoy looked around in his pocket, but couldn't find the wallet. He must have left it at the poolhouse back at Peterborough.

"No need to worry, if you're hungry, I can offer you the ramen for free." The cancarrot said, smiling.

Celljoy thought that cancarrot's large carrot shaped arms would be difficult to grab hold of the ramen cups. However the ramen cups were sucked up with its arms before applying some water and heating it up in the gas station's microwave.

"Wow, you're so cool buddy!" Budsof cheerfully said.

As Celljoy couldn't help but watch with his mouth open wide, the cancarrot then got the ramen out of the microwave and prepared the seasoning packets into the food before serving it to them.

"Thank you so much, that was incredibly generous of you." Celljoy softly said, smiling.

“No problem, I’d rather be generous to any customer than be lazy or greedy.” The cancarrot replied.

“This is something I can relate to from what I read, ‘You will be enriched in every way to be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will produce thanksgiving to God.’” Celljoy said.

“Enjoy guys.” The cancarrot said cheerfully.

As both Celljoy and Budsof began slurping up and eating the ramen from their cups, they suddenly felt both the satisfaction and comfort while looking around the aisles. Budsof then caught something surprising in his eyes.

“Oh Celljoy, look!” Budsof exclaimed, “You’re on TV!”

Celljoy looks up on the TV screen hanging on the ceiling. It looked just like himself on the screen, but was playing so fast with the movements and actions. Celljoy ran across in the center while other characters were on both sides of the screen. Hopping up, Celljoy then places leaps above a curlysnug and runs to do a high-five with Budsof.

Then the screen changed to him staring at the camera while in a space background, waving hello to the viewers. And suddenly, it then changed to him facing a giant welding a giant axe, slamming it down to the ground before knocking Celljoy out.

Then another threatening giant landed on him before it laughed manically. But then something astonished had happened, Celljoy lifted up the giant's foot before it threw the giant, slamming it onto the ground. Celljoy jumped in joy before other images flashed on the screen, including a face with eyes blasting flames from its mouth and Celljoy flying on a board up in the air.

Then as more flashing images came to be, Celljoy then leaped down on the screen as the title came on: Celljoy of the Stars.

"Wow, I must look great on the small screen!" Celljoy said, "I could tell that since Sandra proved that we're pure innocent creations, my species became huge in the television department."

"It honestly explains how we're blessed, look you're even in this magazine." Budsof said, as he kept on eating his ramen.

Celljoy looked at the magazine section, where on the cover of a television guide, he was on the cover.

“Yep, as long as our Heavenly Father helps us make humans happy with our cheerful attitudes and humility in our lives, especially with acting roles, we can make a huge impact in their lives.” Celljoy said, smiling at the cover.

As they continued eating their ramens, they finished up after sipping the juice from their cups before throwing it away in the garbage. And as they waved goodbye to the cancarrot, another critter suddenly opened up the doors.

It was another cudfly, but was different from the usual cudflies they had seen before. It was a bit more messier, especially with the fluff. And their wings were way more shinier, sparkly with a sweet aroma that expels out with each flap. Nonetheless, it was still cheerful like any other cudflies.

“Hey guys!” The cudfly said.

“Huh? What happened to you, cudfly?” Celljoy asked.

“Ah I’m part of a group of cudflies that are a bit more messier in our appearance, but we’re still friendly to anyone we see here.” It said, “I had seen you two before, you were talking to that butterfloat, didn’t ya?”

“Oh yeah, we were there prior.” Budsof giggled, “I had no idea you were seeing us from far away.”

“Well I was just taking a nice little flight to search for a certain star in the sky, that’s when I found you guys before.” The cudfly said, “I guess it would make sense, I hope.”

“No worries, it's all good.” Celljoy said, smiling.

“Say, I was thinking if ya’ wanna see our own home?” The cudfly asked, “We have more Cudflies there and other buddies chilling around.”

“Well, if it isn’t going to kill us by hanging out there for a little bit, we could perhaps go there.” Budsof replied.

“That’s great, follow me then.” The cudfly said, flying around happily behind them.

“Sure, a little meeting couldn’t hurt, right?” Celljoy laughed.

As they both left, the cheerful cancarrot chilled around for a while when suddenly the door opened up out of nowhere. The carrot being looked up and as it did, the same pack of mountain lions were now growling and roaring at the being.

It didn’t hesitate as it began shooting out the carrots from its arms, with the carrots smacking at the pumas’ nose, eyes and paws painfully. The roars intensified, but with the force of the carrots coming out of its long carrot-shaped arms, the pumas then retreated out of the gas station.

“And stay out, pumas!” the cancarrot laughed.

Chapter Five

"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will surely help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Isaiah 41:10 (BSB)

When the trio arrived at their home, around the area that had a river and a bridge, it resembled a regular house albeit made out of wood, meaning it was clear that the cudflies had been using wood wisely.

"This must be your place, right?" Celljoy inquired, turning to the other creature curiously.

"Yep!" The cudfly replied, "I think you'll like hanging out here. You can come any time you want. Perhaps a little party you could orchestrate for Christmas?"

“From what I am hearing there, I believe there are other cudflies and creatures living inside this house.” Budsof said.

As they walked to the front door, Celljoy suddenly remembered what the grempom had wanted to say about the insect lifeforms.

“Hey, I wanted to say that when both my bud and I were going on our way to Janesboro, the grempom told me to say hello to you and the other cudflies.” Celljoy explained.

“That’s really nice of the being, we’re the ones that helped that fella and the other grempoms out with the underground home.” The cudfly replied gratefully, smiling. “But why are you guys going to Janesboro?”

“It’s a party we’re going to, to celebrate Christmas.” Budsof explained, “Not only will we enjoy the food and company of others, but also to celebrate the birthday of the son of the Heavenly Father.”

“Sweet, we’d love to participate if you want.” The cudfly exclaimed, smiling back.

As the cudfly opened up the front door, there were many other cudflies hanging around. Many of them were in different colors, ranging from red to grey to pink to blue and even yellow.

“Hey, what did you just bring along?” The pink cudfly asked.

“Oh,, I just met two new buddies who are ok hanging out for a bit before they have to depart.” The cudfly replied.

“Oh hey guests, it’s nice to see you.” The pink cudfly replied, smiling at Celljoy and Budsof.

“It’s a pleasure to see you all here, it sure must be relaxing.” Celljoy said.

“It really is,” The grey cudfly quipped, “But make sure you got no bombs with ya’. There’s someone among the many creatures hangin’ out there, makin’ bombs.”

“We’re cautious when it comes to that, aren’t we buddy?” Budsof chuckled.

But his friend wasn’t replying to Budsof’s question. Celljoy opened up a door somewhere

that had led him to another location somehow. Budsof was now worried, not wanting to be left alone, and so he went to the door to find his friend.

He ended up in the same location Celljoy was in, but it wasn't the same place. They were in a large island of towns and overarching hills, complete with a cathedral on top. And as they looked around, there were a bunch of their kind, albeit in different colors.

"Were are we?" Celljoy asked, "That door I went in shouldn't be doing this."

"This is strange, perhaps it's a simulation inside." Budsof replied.

As they went to see their kind, Budsof went a bit farther than Celljoy, so he was lost in a sea of leafy bud buddies.

"Hi!" The gray celljoy exclaimed.

"Oh hello, are we far away from home?" Celljoy asked.

“Who knows? Perhaps it is completely true.” The orange celljoy answered.

Celljoy gasped in horror, he ran past the other celljoys to find his friend.

“Budsof! Where are you?” Celljoy yelped.

Far from him, Budsof was meeting up with his kind, some of them looking wild, such as one that had many sweets all over its body.

“Hey, sweet bud!” Cake budsof happily said.

“Nice to meet you, I see you have lots of sweets. Can I try one?” Budsof asked.

“Sorry, I don’t know if it’s edible.” Cake budsof joked.

Celljoy was still looking for his friend, which was already becoming fruitless. It was like trying to look for a needle in some haystack. Eventually, after more desperate searching, Celljoy finally sees his friend that was with the other budsofs.

“We gotta return now!” Celljoy gasped.

“What’s wrong, buddy?” Budsof asked, concerned.

“We’re far away from home, we gotta go home.” Celljoy replied frantically.

“But the cake budsof said this whole area is simulated, this whole place isn’t even real.” Budsof chuckled, “Someone must have been using a computer to simulate the area, even though we’re probably inside the basement.”

Celljoy was stunned. The fluffy eared specimen wasn’t aware that someone had brought a device inside some large room. Could it be a familiar dropple behind it? Celljoy wasn’t sure, but they decided to go back after Budsof waving goodbye to the other budsofs in there.

As they left from the door, the cudflies were surprised to see the two return from the door.

“Where have you guys been?” The cudfly laughed.

“Since when did you guys get a device to simulate a place inside this room?” Celljoy asked.

The whole room was filled with a deafening silence, aside from the buzzing from the cudflies' large wings. Then a familiar being walked into the room, a dropple named Smitty.

"It's a long story, hehe." Smitty laughed, "I have obtained a device from far away to simulate any place inside the large room. It was in case they needed to have some escapism if they felt bored."

Celljoy's guess was correct.

"If anyone wants escapism, why don't they fly and have fun outside?" Budsof joked.

They all laughed before they continued on chatting and having fun. Celljoy and Budsof followed Smitty into the other room as they continued to talk about what happened back there.

"I don't know why I was scared in the first place." Celljoy laughed.

"It was still fun regardless, there were so many budsofs I had never seen before." Budsof said, smiling.

As they went into the room where Smitty was chilled in, there were two other creatures sitting next to the dropple. One was a fluffy hexagon shaped being with a star pattern and long yellow arms and feet, and the other was a moth with large orange wings and grey fluff on the bottom half of its body. Those two were a celestistar and a snugmoth.

“What do you think of the friends I had also brought along with me?” Smitty asked.

“They’re cute, it’s a pleasure to see them.” Celljoy replied.

They all embraced Celljoy and Budsof with many hugs and noozles, rubbing their fluff around like a teddy bear, before sitting back down.

“I love those hugs, also we have to go soon because of the party.” Budsof said.

“Ooh, a party?” the celestistar asked.

“Can we join? I’d love some bright lights.” The snugmoth asked, smiling.

“Of course. It's at Janesboro.” Celljoy replied. “I bet a moth lifeform like you would like the lights in our hometown.”

“Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!” The snugmoth exclaimed, flying around its wings happily before noozling both Celljoy and Budsof again with its fluff.

“I can’t wait to see you guys there!” Budsof said, smiled.

As Celljoy then looked up to see the view outside, he then suddenly noticed a small robotic-looking being sitting on the porch. It looked small, yet it also looked alone.

“Uh guys, what’s that being outside on the porch?” Celljoy asked curiously.

“That’s Ti-Q.” Smitty replied, “She’s resting outside, why?”

“Well it's because I never had seen that creature before, though you had mentioned it years ago to my late friend Noah.” Celljoy said back, “Also I can’t help but feel bad looking at it sitting all alone, in the cold night.”

As Celljoy looked continuously with concern, Budsof was creating something behind Celljoy's back. It was something that his friend would like for being a good friend. But when Celljoy called him, he placed his little gift in his leaves around his body before getting up and snuggled up with his friend, looking at the same being outside through the window.

"I feel bad for that little being too." The celestistar sighed, "If you want in the name of the Lord, you can comfort her."

"That's what I would love to do honestly, I just couldn't stand seeing someone all alone and sad during the holidays." Celljoy replied.

Celljoy and Budsof then went to the backdoor of the house, where Ti-Q was sitting on the porch alone. As they watched together, it was sitting and staring at the snow-filled forest, surrounded by a starry night sky. The sound it was making sounded like crying.

"Should we do something to comfort this being?" Celljoy whispered.

“Well, I had some jokes in mind.” Budsof whispered back.

The whispers caught the attention of the small being, turning its body behind to see them.

“Huh?” Ti-Q asked, “Who are you two?”

They were saddened by what Celljoy and Budsof were looking at, the being was crying, but not in the same way creatures or humans cry. Feeling such sorrow, Celljoy walked first to the porch and sat aside Ti-Q.

“We’re here to help you,” Celljoy answered “I saw you from the window and couldn’t help but feel bad. I’m Celljoy. What’s your name, little one?”

“Uh.. I’m Ti-Q.” It replied, “Please… don’t hurt me…”

“We’re not going to hurt you, I promise.” Budsof comforted, “It’s never our priority, we don’t want to harm anyone.”

“That’s an interesting name.” Celljoy said, “Does calling you Tibot sound alright?”

“Uh thanks… I guess…” Ti-Q replied, sobbing. “I’ve been lost on this planet and… I cannot find my family…”

“Oh jeez…” Budsof frowned.

“I can see why you’re outside all alone then.” Celljoy said.

“It’s a long story, I’ll explain to you…” Ti-Q sighed, tears leaking down.

The creature then explained why it was here, apparently the planet Ti-Q and her family came from, was suffering from overpopulation and a lack of resources necessary. Ti-Q and her family, as well as others of its kind, decided to move to new homes far away. But while they were in a pod, on the trip with her family, a meteorite smashed into her pod, causing it to fall to Earth.

“This is the reason why I am here… suffering…” Ti-Q sobbed.

Celljoy and Budsof couldn’t help but cry from hearing her story. Hugging the creature softly, Celljoy sat closer to the being.

“That’s tragic to hear, I’m really sorry to hear that.” Celljoy frowned.

Budsof agrees as Celljoy watches up in the night sky. Perhaps the meteorite that smashed Ti-Q’s pod could be one of the same small meteorites that came down years ago, when Celljoy himself and others came out of there.

He couldn’t help but let his imagination soar through his mind, reflecting the tragic story the poor robot told them. Celljoy then felt a sense of hope as an idea came to his mind. Perhaps Ti-Q’s family was somewhere, far from where they are, trying to look for her.

“Maybe your family is still out there.” Celljoy said, breaking the silence. “What if they’re still searching for you?”

“I’m not really sure…” Ti-Q sniffed, “I’ve been here for many months and I hadn’t received any contact with them yet…”

“Trust in the Lord, maybe He will help you find your parents eventually.” Celljoy comforted back.

“I agree with my friend, trust in the Creator.” Budsof followed, “Who knows? Maybe they’ll find a signal for you somewhere.”

“Do you wanna go back inside for some warmth?” Celljoy asked.

“I could, but…” Ti-Q stuttered, “But… I don’t like being inside the house. You see, any hot climate would fry me up from the insides…”

Celljoy stared at the being surprised. He didn’t realize the being would fry up from anything warm.

“Well I would have given you some comfort with others inside.” Budsof said.

“Thanks for the offer guys.” Ti-Q sighed, “But as I said, I really cannot enter the house…”

Smitty opened the back door and saw his friends sitting alongside the small being.

“Ti-Q, wanna have something to eat?” Smitty asked.

“Sure, I’m kind of hungry actually…” Ti-Q replied, “I’d probably eat some seafood…”

“Actually, how do you eat?” Celljoy asked curiously.

“Yeah, it would be weird since you’re a robot being.” Budsof followed.

“Well, I’m more of a living organism than a robot.” Ti-Q replied.

“That’s something then.” Budsof chuckled lightly, “But there’s nothing to worry about, your family could find you soon. After all, Christmas is about hope, the Lord wants anyone to be hopeful, not feel hopelessness.”

Ti-Q softly smiles at them, “Thank you guys so much. I appreciate that.”

Then out of nowhere, an unusual lifeform hopped next to Smitty on the back door. It was Stopette, that creature the large millipede mentioned before.

“Hey y’all!” Stopette said, smiling.

“Oh hey, nice to see you here.” Celljoy said.

“Who is that?” Ti-Q asked.

“That’s Stopette, she’s a friend of mine from far away.” Smitty replied.

“Nice to meet you little one, what’s your name?” Stopette asked, smiling.

“Oh I’m Ti-Q…” It said, “Nice to meet you too.”

Then a flying grey cudfly swopped past Smitty and Stopette out of the back door to see Celljoy and Budsof alongside Ti-Q.

“What’s goin’ on here?” The gray cudfly asked, chuckling.

“Well I’m just comforting Ti-Q.” Celljoy replied.

“Say guys, did someone leave out a blobby thing on the backporch?” Budsof asked.

They looked at what Budsof was pointing at. It resembled a gigantic mudball, wiggling even though there was no breeze. The gray cudfly flew

around it before grabbing it with its two pairs of arms.

“I don’t know what that is honestly.” Stopette said.

“It looks like some sort of a mudball blob.” The gray cudfly said, “It is jiggly a bit like gelatin.”

Budsof sighed with relief, “At least it wasn’t something dangerous-”

Then, out of nowhere, some sound that was partially audible came from inside the mudball. It sounded like a ticking clock.

“There’s somethin’ ticking inside it.” The gray cudfly said.

Celljoy then realized what that sound was. It wasn’t just a regular mudball, it was a ticking mudbomb.

“It’s a time bomb!” Celljoy yelled.

The cudfly shook its two pairs of arms in horror, it was holding a bomb.

“Yikes!” The grey cudfly yelped.

Throwing the mudbomb onto the backporch, they tried to run but the bomb went off, causing lots of mud to splash all over those who were not covering, including Celljoy and Budsof.

Many of the cudflies watching from the window have enjoyed such a scene. This was an especially stupendous one. Those who saw the mudbomb went off, gasped in shocked delight. The snuggly celestistar gasped soon after, and this particular snugmoth, who was sensitive to any shaking, began hiding underneath the tables while its wings flapped around like crazy.

The mud was pungent in its smell, making it hard to not smell it as they got back up.

“I hope I didn’t roughen your back, friend.” Stopette said.

“It’s ok, why was there a mudbomb though?” Celljoy asked.

“What are the odds of that happening?” Budsof chuckled weakly.

“It has to be one of them cudflies prankin’ us with them mudbombs again!” The gray cudfly cringed.

Ti-Q was the only one that was not affected by the mud, because she hid underneath the stairs on the porch, protecting herself from the mess.

“Oh my! Are you guys alright?” Ti-Q asked.

“Yea, we’re alright.” Celljoy replied, “But what a mess.”

The whole snow-filled backyard was now a mess with the excess amount of mud. The snow wouldn’t be affected by the mud, though it would have a nasty smell to it.

One of the cudflies who left out a mudbomb outside their home, would have infinitely preferred being sprayed with such allergic powder they keep in their fluff.

“Maybe if we could go in the cold waters, we could wash ourselves.” Celljoy said.

He went around the large river, taking off his scarf before going into the waters. Washing off the mud

on his jacket, fluff, face, ears and limbs, he got up before the others did the same.

But after that, the large jellyfish got on the surface of the cold waters, alongside another large jellyfish.

“What was that noise we just heard minutes ago?” Jellybounce asked.

“Oh it's nice to see you, Jellybounce.” Celljoy sighed with relief, “There was a mudbomb that exploded, causing us all to be covered in mud.”

“Am I dreaming this? This whole backyard I am seeing looks like a mess.” Melodia asked.

“This isn’t really a dream, you know?” Jellybounce chuckled.

“Ooh, watery friends!” Budsof giggled. “You look so snuggly, could I go on your bell?”

“Sure!” Jellybounce said, smiling at them.

Budsof carefully got on Jellybounce’s bell and hugged it. The jellyfish’s large thick tentacles

went around and snuggled with Budsof in return. Melodia giggled playfully, alongside others.

As soon as Budsof held on hugging the large friendly jellybounce, something else rose aside the large jellyfishes. It was a colorful sunfish, with shades of blue and yellow and three large fins around the top and bottom.

“What noise did I hear?” It asked.

“Ah, it’s passed already.” Melodia answered, giggling.

“Who is this flat fish?” Celljoy asked curiously.

“Oh I’m a solisfish, related to the ocean sunfish.” It said, smiling at Celljoy sideways. One of its eyes was staring at the fluffy bunny with a large smile.

“Oooh, a sunfish?” Budsof asked.

“You know, those types of large bony fish that go up on the waters’ surface for sunbathing? And also for any seabirds to remove parasites?” Celljoy answered, “That’s what I know about sunfishes myself.”

“Oh yes, this solisfish is a friend of ours.” Jellybounce said, giggling.

“If I could, I could hop out of the lake and onto the snow to see that fluffy fella.” Solisfish said.

“Me? It would be nice, but the snow is filled up with mud, hehe.” Celljoy said.

“I’ve never really seen these creatures before…” Ti-Q said, “They must be enjoying the cold waters.”

“I agree with that.” Stopette said, smiling. “I’d snuggle them both in a flash, as I like making new friends along the way. Though I am from a far away place, so I can’t stay for long.”

“Thanks, those are really nice compliments.” Melodia said, blushing.

A large splash surprised them all, something else had arisen on the water’s surface: A fluffy orange axolotl named Maia and a brown shark named Ielle.

They were curiously observing both Jellybounce, Melodia and that friendly solisfish with curious eyes and cheerful smiles. The axolotl's sweater was soaked from the water, same with the shark's bowtie, but they didn't mind.

"Woah, who are you two?" Budsof asked.

"Oh me?" It said, softly smiling, "Uh, I'm Maia, I'm just really curious about those jellyfishes here."

"He he, thank you for that." Jellybounce said, blushing a bit around its cheeks.

"And I'm Ielle, a friend and also a shark myself." The other followed, "I don't harm anyone, I just like being curious like most sharks, hehe."

"That's thoughtful of you, we do love axolotls and friendly sharks." Melodia said.

"So do we." Celljoy giggled.

"Nice to see you two, hehe." Solisfish said, giggling.

Hopping on the surface, trying not to get mud on their feet, Ielle got the most hugs from Celljoy and Budsof. Though Maia was very shy, it tends to not be involved in much hugging, especially from others it had never seen before.

“What’s wrong?” Budsof asked.

“Uh, I’m so sorry.” Maia giggled awkwardly, “I don't hug much, hehe.”

“We don’t mind some hugs from you, axolotl bud.” Celljoy said, smiling.

Maia began to think on that, much to the others’ suspension, but eventually decided to give in and joined the hugs. It was fluffy, even with the gills around its head and feathery tail.

“I knew you’d enjoy our hugs.” Budsof said, laughing.

They all laughed along wholeheartedly, enjoying their moment, even Ti-Q, Smitty and Stopette were smiling at them peacefully.

But then, out of nowhere again, something's back for trouble. The mountain lions came back, this time it's personal.

"Oh no, not these pumas again…" Celljoy groaned.

The pumas roared ferociously, causing the jellyfishes to swim back into the lake's cold water and almost causing Budsof to drown, which he didn't after Smitty grabbed his leafy hands.

The solisfish flapped its large three fins and swam down for safety, while Maia and Ielle swam back alongside the jellyfishes, promising to see Celljoy and Budsof next time.

"Guys, what's going on?" Ti-Q asked.

"How did you even get here, you fearsome trio!?" Smitty asked.

The pumas couldn't talk because they're feline animals, but they reply with lots of monstrous roarings.

“You don’t want to explain? Look, we're sorry about interrupting your sleep.” Celljoy laughed worryingly.

“I don’t think it's a good idea to talk to lions, especially when they don’t talk like us or humans.” Budsof stuttered. “Especially since they’re one of many fearsome large cats in the world.”

The pumas were ready to use their sharp claws, pumped out of their paws, prepared to scratch and potentially kill those who provoke them.

“Smitty, give me some whipped cream pies.” Celljoy said.

Smitty ran back into the house and retrieved the pie. Passing it onto Celljoy’s hands, the fluffy large eared lifeform was now preparing to fight back.

Then as the mountain lion was beginning to pounce towards them, Budsof shook behind his friend while Celljoy was brave enough to stand up against the ferocious pumas.

“Take this, lions!” Celljoy yelled, throwing the pie right into one of the puma’s faces.

However the pie didn’t really help much. The lions then growled much louder than before.

“I don’t think this was a good idea after all then.” Celljoy shook, “I think we should just do what’s right.”

“Great idea, buddy…” Budsof shook next, “Run!”

They began running while the pumas used their strong legs to jog fast behind. It was a frightful yet amusing chase, running around the forests that surrounded the wooden house and river.

“I don’t think these mountain lions have watched comedy to even get the joke.” Celljoy said, “Perhaps our Heavenly Father could get these pumas to stop chasing us.”

“I don’t think this is the right time to talk about it!” Budsof yelped.

They could have run as fast as a deer, but even with the attempt, the pumas were not willing to cease chasing them.

The forests that surrounded the river and house were dark and dense, like a maze. It felt like it was going to take forever to find yet another hiding spot, and the pumas weren't even restless still. They were still hot on the trail.

“Maybe there’s a good spot right there!” Celljoy yelled.

Celljoy and Budsof smashed their way through a lot of thorn bushes, but it was all for nothing. They ended up going to a dead end.

“Oh no!” Celljoy gasped.

Looking behind, the pumas were now cornering them like bait. Celljoy and Budsof are trapped, surrounded by the carnivorous beasts.

To both Celljoy and Budsof, this was as close to the end of their journey. It was bad enough to be trapped around a dead end; it was worse to not be able to dig themselves into the ground; but being surrounded by mountain lions was a heaping insult on injury to such utterly unbearable degree. They could not bear being shredded into many pieces.

“Please don’t eat us, I beg of you!” Budsof pleaded.

“Spare us with a bone, maestros!” Celljoy stuttered.

The roars were now intensified at them, shaking both friends to their core. Celljoy couldn’t help but bow and pray in the air.

“Oh Lord, save us from danger please.” Celljoy prayed. “Deliver us from these mountain lions, save us with your mercy.”

As he continued to pray, suddenly…

WOOSH!!

There was a homemade net underneath the group of mountain lions, trapping those that were around Celljoy and Budsof. Shroomie was behind, she tightened the rope enough so that the pumas couldn’t get out of there easily.

“That should do it!” Shroomie said.

“S-Shroomie?” Budsof stuttered.

“You just saved our lives, thank you so much!” Celljoy cried, hugging the explorer tightly.

“No problem friends,” Shroomie said, smiling. “I don’t want to see my friends get harmed and eaten.”

Budsof hugged the explorer next, crying as much as his friend. Shroomie then grabbed a little bottle from her backpack and passed it onto Celljoy.

“This should take care of these beasts.” Celljoy said.

Throwing the bottle right at the net, it smashed into many pieces, releasing the liquid right onto the pumas. Then the mountain lions stopped frantically moving and attempting to scratch up the net, before they began napping.

“That’ll do some apples.” Celljoy laughed.

“You’re awesome, Shroomie.” Budsof said, smiling. “You saved us from danger.”

“You’re welcome, friends.” Shroomie replied, “I’d rather see you guys make it back home than you two becoming dinner.”

“Shall we go back in that house, if that’s ok?” Celljoy asked.

Shroomie nodded, they all went back to the wooden house where the other cudflies and creatures were inside. They all cheered at Shroomie for saving the lives of Celljoy and Budsof. They all orchestrated a Christmas party with good intentions, but ended up being chaotic for some, including Stopette, Smitty, Shroomie, and of course, Celljoy and Budsof.

They all went before waving goodbye, hoping to see them at Sandra’s party at Janesboro. As they did, Celljoy and Budsof continued their journey as their eyes continued to be set on the star of Bethlehem.

—

Not far away, the butterfloat flurakin was searching the forests to find Celljoy and Budsof. Its soft fluffy wings were flapping as he zoomed through many trees.

It was still a quiet night for the flurakin, not hearing as much noises as he thought. Then as the

flurakin continued to look, he suddenly spotted the two walking, following the star.

Grabbing the camera that Sandra passed to the flurakin, he takes a photograph of the two before flying away back to Janesboro. Upon returning back to Sandra's home, the flurakin knocked on the door with its long fluffy arms.

"Did you find them?" Sandra asked.

"I did, here's the photograph." Butterfloat replied, passing on the photo to her.

She felt a sense of hope at last, seeing that both of her friends were still alive, walking and looking right at the star that was around the town.

"Thanks, you saved me some worries." Sandra said, smiling before hugging the flurakin.

"You're welcome!" Butterfloat replied, smiling back.

Chapter Six

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15:13 (BSB)

When they continued on their trail back, Celljoy and Budsof suddenly heard a strange voice coming from the hills. They snuck carefully and ducked behind the snow.

"What could that noise be coming from?" Budsof asked his friend in a low whisper.

Celljoy crawled up slowly to peek and realized that it was none other than a lot of other creatures around the vast forest away from their location. It was stupendous yet surprising to see such an encounter in the midst of the cold winter air; for at all times and seasons his fancy was nothing but

praying, having a fun time, playing with his friends, and enjoying a sense of adventure. His mind danced with the image of Don Quixote looking at the two armies, while Sancho Panza saw two groups of sheep in the broad plain.

Now the creatures he had seen were raised by two giant trees they were surrounding, perhaps trying to search for a Christmas tree of their own. Celljoy was so overjoyed that these lifeforms were willing to celebrate Jesus' birthday on their own, that he said to his friend: "They may need our help, don't you agree?"

"Yeah," Budsof agreed, "We must give aid and assistance to those who need help. As we all know, once the Lord gives us the grace and love into our hearts, we have to do what's right. Just like how famous people help out those in need, it's what Jesus needs us to do, show his love towards others by doing what's right."

"Though, why are they walking around these trees?" Celljoy asked.

"They must be in a search for a perfect Christmas tree," Budsof replied, "because if they don't find a good tree, it would be hard to celebrate the

holidays without a luscious tree. Though it doesn't need to be perfect, as any tree is good enough."

"By my fluff," Celljoy said, "you're not wrong about that. Though I don't want to see anyone disappointed when they cannot find a good tree. I want to help them as much as I can."

"In that thou wilt do what is thy duty, Celljoy." Budsof said, smiling. "For to engage in such help of this sort, we gotta do such good deeds no matter what."

"That I can well understand," Celljoy answered, "but how and where shall we find a tree for them? For I believe it has not been the custom to interrupt their search effort."

"That's true," Budsof laughed, "and what you had best do with him is to leave them to take such chance whether they be hopeless or not, for the grace we shall have when we come out victorious, will be so many that even any starvelvets will run such risks of being changed for another. But attend to both of us and observe."

They did so, placing themselves on the cold snow-filled ground, from which they began observing the scene.

“Those lifeforms whom thou seest yonder in their fruitful search, whose sweaters they wore had symbols that looked stupendously amazing.” Celljoy observed, “One of them has lots of hearts, strung around with flowers of gold and green vines sprinkling with glitter. Another one has a large smiling face in lots of golds, silvers and sparkles. But turn thine eyes to the other creatures, and thou shalt see in front and on the rest of those lifeforms, their sweaters were like ugly Christmas sweaters.”

And so, Celljoy went on describing the other sweaters he spotted the other lifeforms were wearing, carried away by Budsof’s giggles as he continued speaking. One memorable account from Celljoy, is that he spotted one sweater, which read: “*HEY FRIEND :3*”

What a number of symbols and creative use of colors in those sweaters! He admired how the creatures had crafted them by hand, especially since he never saw any creature designing their own clothing before. Perhaps the cudflies used

their old fluff they shed every now and then, to potentially use it as yarn for crafting.

Budsof hung upon Celljoy's words for a minute without speaking. The bud was amazed as he looked alongside his friend.

"Bud, could this whole thing be a mirage, or a deceitful enchantment?" Budsof asked, "It looks too good to be true."

"I know it looks true to me," Celljoy replied, "we couldn't let them be fruitless in their search."

As Celljoy finished speaking, he got up from the ground and dashed down from the hill to the forest with as much spirit and joy as if he was accompanied by a knight in shining armor. As Celljoy reached down to the hill, he almost nearly smacked himself into a tree, but missed by dodging it.

"Wait for me!" Budsof called, running right behind Celljoy.

As they both reached where those sweater-wearing creatures are in the land of many trees, they spotted many familiar ones they had seen. There

was another yet cheerful calmsnug, a cancarrot that had many homemade Christmas lights strung around its puffy white body, a large yet compassionate medblob, and a star-crossed sollux with its gems having Christmas colors.

“Hey, do you want some help?” Budsof asked.

“Yeah, I think we need a bit of a helping hand.” The cancarrot replied.

“We’re trying to find the perfect Christmas tree, so we could bring it home and light it up for this occasion.” The sollux followed, smiling.

“I knew I was right all along.” Celljoy chuckled, “We can help you guys.”

They began to look around in the forest, hoping that these cheerful lifeforms, including Celljoy and Budsof, could find a beautiful tree that they would like. However, and I mean however literally, their search was troubling and truthfully fruitless. It was a struggle, especially for Celljoy, because he couldn’t stop taking deep breaths after each jog.

Budsof, on the other hand, was calm and optimistic, because of his joyful attitude. The bud was confident and hopeful as others followed him too. But Celljoy wasn't as calm, he was hoping to beat them to it by finding an excellent tree. It took them 30 minutes at best.

"Did you see any yet?" Budsof asked.

"Sadly no." The cancarrot replied.

"Me neither, this is trickier than I thought." Budsof sighed.

"You think it was tricker, but I think it's much tougher than trickier." Celljoy chuckled.

However, Celljoy heard a twinkling heavenly noise coming from far away. Could it be not that far from them?

"Do you hear that noise?" Celljoy asked.

"Huh?" Budsof inquired, confused.

"The noise I hear, I can hear it." Celljoy replied.

Budsof had to carefully listen, but once he heard

it, he turned towards the direction where the noise was coming from.

“I think it's coming from that way, c’mon!” Budsof said.

They began to run towards the direction, where they continued to hear the sound. As they did, a glow was glowing close to them as they reached the area. When they reached it, the glow was lighting around a large yet beautiful tree. It was such a peaceful scene.

“This looks so beautiful, who brought us here?” Celljoy asked.

“That’s Angelheart!” Budsof exclaimed, “By the grace of the Lord, the angels had brought us here.”

“Thanks.” Celljoy said, smiling as he placed his hands together and looked up.

“You have found the perfect tree.” The calmsnug said, hugging both Celljoy and Budsof.

“It’s not a big deal, honestly.” Celljoy replied.

“But it is a big deal.” The medblob said, “If it wasn’t for you guys and the angels, we wouldn’t have found this awe-inspiring tree.”

“I agree with my friend.” The sollux followed.

Both Celljoy and Budsof smiled with tears, hugging them before they helped cut down the large tree for them to use. It took over an hour, especially when they had to lever up the large tree. They had no ropes, so one of the creatures had to call upon some cudflies to help out with some ropes.

The ropes the cudflies used were made out of their old fluff, as mentioned before, so as they tighten their old fluff for use as ropes, they had to make sure it wouldn’t break when trying to get the tree up. As they finished using the ropes, the cancarrot used a special cannon arm to shoot out homemade Christmas lights instead of carrots. Perhaps it was some kind of special cancarrot instead of the common species Celljoy and Budsof usually saw. The tree was higher compared to the other trees, which does make it easier to spot for certain lifeforms and birds to see.

“This is perfect!” Celljoy said, smiling.

“You can say that again, buddy.” Budsof followed, “It’s the most beautiful tree I have ever seen.”

“Should we carol around the tree?” The cancarrot asked.

“Oh yes, I love carols.” The cheerful sollux replied.

“So do I!” The calmsnug followed.

“Me too.” The medblob said, hopping in joy.

They began to carol around their tree by singing uplifting Christmas songs and hymns before praying, thanking the Lord.

Celljoy and Budsof then realized something, they literally forgot their homecoming. They forgot Sandra’s party and now their minds clicked back.

“Oh no, I forgot about the trip back home.” Celljoy sighed.

“You’re right, we forgot about that.” Budsof chuckled, “But don’t worry, we can still make it back. Thanks for letting me know.”

“No worries, you guys can go now.” The calmsnug said, smiling at them. “Thank you both for helping us, you both should be grateful for this deed. I will not forget this.”

“I agree, thank you!” The cancarrot said.

They all hugged Celljoy and Budsof warmly and softly before they began walking out of the forest.

“Bless you all in the name of the Lord, and I wish you a merry Christmas!” Celljoy exclaimed.

It seemed to them, that all such good deeds and mishaps that had befallen onto them was derailing their homecoming. Perhaps as they engage in their continuing journey, they’ll soon befall into yet another misfortune.

“Say Cell, I got a little funny story to tell you if that’s ok?” Budsof asked curiously.

“Sure, what story do you have in mind?” Celljoy replied.

“Well one night, I visited a little inn around Peterborough that time when you and I were going

there for a visit." Budsof explained, "And at that inn, there were some beds. Most of them were really strong, but one of them was worn over by those who had slept on it too many times. And guess what bed I slept in? Guess."

"That broken one?" Celljoy asked.

"Yep, that ramshackled bed." Budsof answered, "And around early in the morning, when I was asleep in the bed, some muscular fella thought it was a good idea to jump on the bed. And when he did, the inn shook violently that the bed I was sleeping in wasn't firm on its feet. And because it was unable to support the additional weight and withstood the shaking, the bed of mine came down to the ground with a mighty crash. The innkeeper woke up and thought that there was some fight going on, and because of that and the innkeepers' furious temperament, he came running with many fists and proceeded to throw me out with a fistful of sand."

Celljoy burst out into laughter, "Did the innkeeper find out that you weren't responsible?"

"Not sure, but if he did, the innkeeper would have

thrown the poor muscular fella into the pool in a rage.” Budsof giggled.

As Celljoy continued their trail with puffs of laughter, he then suddenly fell into a hole, which had to be covered by a lot of branches and leaves. He let out a long scream, but stopped when he crashed down into the ground. It was so dark, he couldn’t see around him except for the gaping hole above where a narrow beam of light shone through.

“Did I just fall into the cave of Montesinos?” Celljoy thought, “I don’t know where I am honestly, it's too dark in here.”

“Oh no, Celljoy!” Budsof yelled, racing towards the hole in the ground.

He gazed down, but all he could see was darkness. “Are you alright, did you get hurt down there?”

“Don’t worry, I’m alright.” Celljoy groaned, “But who in the world decided to dig such a ridiculously long hole in the ground?”

“I have no idea, and that wouldn’t be me either.” Budsof chuckled, “My hands and feet are too

short, even stubby. I couldn't even have the strength to carry a long shovel."

Celljoy looked around the hole, though he had some feelings of worry and claustrophobia in his mind. The round dug holes around him were entirely dirty.

"Say, would you be able to get me out of this hole?" Celljoy asked.

"I can try, though I am not sure if there will be something that'll reach that far." Budsof replied, frowning.

The bud then searched around the area where Celljoy had fallen from. As he did, he suddenly noticed a large thick vine that was conveniently sticking out of the ground beside the hole.

"Here, grab onto this!" Budsof said.

The vine went as far down for Celljoy to reach. With his large hands, he held tightly onto the rope, but the force he was gripping on the rope was so strong that Budsof struggled to keep hold on it. As Celljoy continued to climb onto the rope, out of nowhere, Budsof then fell into the hole with such

force that he kept his leafy arms tight around the vine still.

Collapsing onto Celljoy, Budsof was now dizzy.

“Now what?” Celljoy asked.

“We’re stuck…” Budsof stuttered.

They wouldn’t make it back home this easily. Feeling a sense of some isolation, even with his friend, he began to pray to the Lord for a miracle. A miracle to get them out, so they could finally reach their destination.

But then, Celljoy remembered something he did years ago. He remembered digging underground next to Max’s house while his late friend Noah and Max had followed the sound. It was something Celljoy had forgotten this whole time, but now the memory vividly returned to his mind.

“I could dig out. Why didn’t I think of this earlier?” Celljoy said eagerly, “I’m a fluffy bunny specimen, after all!”

Celljoy then used his hands and began digging a large enough hole for him and his friend to get

out. Budsof had to endure as much dirt his friend was throwing toward his direction. As they dug all the way up, they finally reached back on land at last. Celljoy thanked the Lord with tears and began kissing the ground, even though both him and his bud was now covered in dirt.

“You’re a genius bud!” Budsof said, hugging Celljoy. “If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t know what to do if I was stuck in the hole on my own.”

“You can thank the Heavenly Father for that.” Celljoy said, smiling. “Though, who was responsible for the hole?”

“Should I take a look around there?” Budsof said, pointing to an area far from the hole. “Perhaps something could be hiding somewhere in there.”

Celljoy nodded, and the bud then began searching around carefully, looking down as to not end up falling back down in the same hole once again. As he continued to look, he suddenly saw something that surprised the flowery bud.

There was something huge sticking out of the ground, resembling a large fungus bell. It looked

thick yet bouncy at the same time. It let out a little mischievous laugh.

“Hey Celljoy, take a look at this!” Budsof called.

Budsof went back to get his friend to see what he saw. And when Celljoy saw what Budsof saw, he was taken by surprise.

“Wow, is that a large shroom?” Celljoy asked, “I didn’t know we brought a large fungus plant along the way, unless it's something else…”

“Has this always been here? And could we touch it?” Budsof asked back.

“I’m not sure about that sort of idea.” Celljoy chuckled, “What if it is poisonous, shooting out clouds of toxic poison?”

“I doubt that, in fact it looks bouncy!” Budsof laughed.

Going onto the large bell, Budsof then began jumping and bouncing on it, giggling with each bounce, all while Celljoy looked with uncertainty.

“Hehehe, it’s so bouncy.” Budsof giggled, “Look at me go!”

As he continued bouncing onto the bell, suddenly it rose out of the ground, startling Celljoy. He shook violently while Budsof continued bouncing joyfully. It looked exactly like Shroomie, except it had different colors.

“Woah S-Shroomie, what happened t-to you?” Celljoy asked, stuttering.

Budsof hopped out of the bell and onto the ground next to Celljoy unscathed and unharmed.

“He he, I’m not that explorer.” It answered.

“I don’t really think that’s the same one.” Budsof whispered, “It looks different to me.”

“You’re right, bud.” It said, “Name’s Shroombelle, a lil’ prankster.”

Celljoy was surprised, he didn’t know that Shroomie had a similar cousin or doppelganger.

“Please don’t hurt us though, we’re kind.” Celljoy said, “We wouldn’t even hurt a fly.”

“I’m not going to hurt ‘ya both, sillies!” Shroombelle laughed, “I like doing pranks and tactics for laughs.”

“Could that explain the hole?” Budsof curiously asked.

“Yep, hehe!” Shroombelle answered.

“Ohh, lemme get this straight,” Celljoy said, “you do harmless stuff for the sake of fun?”

“Yep.” Shroombelle replied.

“Are you part of the same species from far away, like Shroomie?” Budsof asked.

“Yep, I'm her doppelganger as well.” Shroombelle said.

“Makes sense to me.” Celljoy laughed, “Well both me and my bud are going to Janesboro for Christmas. You’re free to come over if you want, for just this occasion.”

“Christmas? What’s that?” Shroombelle asked, confused.

“It’s to celebrate the birthday of Jesus,” Celljoy said, “That and the family, presents and food as well.”

“Sounds good to me, I could join.” Shroombelle said, smiling.

“That’s great, we gotta get there before it's too late. See ‘ya!” Budsof said.

As they continued their trail, Shroombelle waved bye and did her mischievous laugh. It wouldn’t be the last time they’ll see her.

—

Eventually Celljoy and Budsof finally saw a sign, it read:

THE PETERBOROUGH - JANESBORO BRIDGE

“Yes! We’re almost there.” Celljoy exclaimed happily.

“This bridge should not be an issue.” Budsof replied, “After we get to the bridge, we have the national park left before we reach home.”

“Totally, this bridge is as solid as a rock.” Celljoy laughed.

“A rock?” Budsof asked curiously, “Are you assuming it is stable and strong?”

“Well, only a bunch of creatures could potentially bring the bridge down, but since we’re safe from the mountain lions, this should not be a problem-ey.” Celljoy replied, trying not to chuckle so hard.

“Yeah, that’s true.” Budsof said, “Hopefully they won’t bother us anymore.”

They both began to laugh together as they continued their way, while following the star of Bethlehem.

—

Far back, the net where the mountain lions are still in, suddenly began cutting loose from the pressure on the tree branch. As it crashed down to the

ground, the pumas growled calmly as the pack began to wake up from the slumber.

It then growled louder, attracting attention from more pumas across the forests. Now the pack increased, meaning double the trouble for the trio.

—

Once Celljoy and Budsof reached the area where the huge bridge could be seen. It was a wide and huge wooden structure, and it was built to allow anyone to go across the river from Janesboro to Peterborough. At the end of the bridge on the other side, the fluffy yet tall curlysnug was waiting for them as well. Its long giraffe-like neck bent up as it began to wake up from its own sleep.

“Celljoy! Budsof!” The curlysnug called, “Where have you been? Sandra is waiting for you.”

“I know, it’s a long story.” Celljoy awkwardly chuckled.

The giraffe-like creature chuckled back as well.

“No need to explain, friends.” The curlysnug said, smiling. “I’m glad you finally came. Sandra will be happy to see you soon.”

“That’s great to hear,” Budsof said, “We’ll get through the bridge in no time.”

Both friends began setting their foot onto the bridge calmly yet peacefully as they began to go across. It seemed so peaceful, where they now see some beautiful and colorful lights dancing across the starry sky.

“The aurora borealis!” Budsof exclaimed, “It’s pretty.”

“I know right?” Celljoy asked, “I’m honestly grateful that you had been on my side. I cannot wait to be with my friends at Janesboro.”

Sniffing a bit with some tears, Budsof comforted him on his side as they continued to cross the bridge.

“Don’t cry my friend.” Budsof said. “I’m happy for you.”

“Thanks, those were my joyful tears.” Celljoy said back.

The peaceful curlysnug was still watching them while waiting on the other side, hopping joyfully when they came near.

“Take your time friends.” The curlysnug said, “It won’t be a problem if you guys take it slowly.”

Then out of nowhere, the ground started shaking around them. It was as if a herd or stampede was about to come around the area, things were now getting much more tense they stopped dead in their tracks.

“What was that?” The curlysnug asked.

“I have no clue.” Celljoy chuckled, “Could it be my stomach?”

“Uh, I don’t think so.” Budsof stuttered, “Look…”

As they both looked behind, including the curlysnug, there was now a large mob of pumas coming right behind them. One of the largest pumas then jumped right onto the bridge, shaking up the bridge. The bridge’s wood began to

progressively crack as more and more pumas followed.

“Yikes!” The curlysnug yelled.

“Oh no, those beasts are back!” Celljoy said.

The pumas roared in unison, amplifying their ferocity. Budsof began shaking a lot more than before.

“This is not good, we’re toast for sure!” Budsof stuttered.

Celljoy however, had enough with the fear he had to endure with the mountain lions. He decided to stand up for his friend once and for all.

“You lions don’t scare us.” Celljoy said, “Why do you all have a vendetta against us? All because I woke you up from the nightly slumber? Why can’t you just leave us all alone and spare us with the Lord’s grace?”

“Celljoy, don’t!” Budsof yelped.

“I wanted to just celebrate Christ’s birthday with my own friends, I didn’t want to endure any

scratches from you beasts." Celljoy continued, "I promise that peace from the Creator will befall upon you if you leave us alone. I beg of you, don't hurt us."

"I don't want you to get killed for me, let's just run." Budsof stuttered.

"If you come near us, you'll regret attacking us." Celljoy begged, "I'm sorry for waking you all up, I beg of you. Please…"

But none of the words had any effect on the mountain lions, which in response, they began to roar much louder than before. And in an instant, the pumas began running ferociously with their strong legs.

"Let's get outta here!" Budsof yelled.

They began running across the bridge, more than ever before, while the pumas continued to run towards them. The bridge then suddenly began crumbling apart, causing each of the wood logs to split in half. With each log falling right into the large watery lake, the lions began to descend right into the waters.

Celljoy reached the other side, but Budsof wasn't so lucky. The bud fell down, but not before holding onto an edge of the ground, using his leafy arms to keep holding on. Celljoy looked down and desperately held his hand to his friend.

"Hold my hand!" Celljoy exclaimed.

"I-I can't…" Budsof said, struggling in his grasp on the edge, "I'm not strong enough…"

"You can do this, I cannot lose you bud." Celljoy pleaded.

"But… h-how?" Budsof asked.

"You're my best friend, trust in me bud…" Celljoy replied.

Realizing the love he heard from Celljoy, Budsof suddenly remembered the good time in his eyes, it was flashing before him. His eyes leaked out tears, and with enough strength, he lifted up his other leafy arm and held it up to Celljoy's hand. His friend grabs the arm and grabs the bud back up with his strength.

As Budsof finally got up, they began to cry together with tight hugs.

“Thank you so much, Celljoy!” Budsof cried.

“You’re welcome, I really do care about you.” Celljoy cried back, “I care about my friends, including you. I couldn’t lose you next after losing Noah years ago.”

The giraffe-like lifeform came around and snuggled up the two friends with its long fluffy neck.

“Oh thank the stars you both made it out!” The curlysnug said, “I was worried sick that you both wouldn’t make it out of there. Now that the bridge is gone, I guess someone has to make a new bridge again.”

“Yeah, but at least the pumas could finally leave us alone.” Celljoy assured, “At least we could get back home soon enough.”

“That’s great, I cannot wait to see you back at Janesboro. Good luck!” The curlysnug exclaimed happily before it left.

As both Celljoy and Budsof got up, they looked at each other with peacefulness, the presence of the Lord helped out much more as they felt a lot safer from the mountain lions.

“What are we waiting for, friend? Let’s go home.” Budsof asked softly.

“Yes, friend.” Celljoy replied.

Both best friends walked from the destroyed bridge, still maintaining the focus on the star while they continued their long journey back home.

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the ruined bridge, the mountain lions then rose back up, now completely soaked up from the water. However, as they got on the surface, the pumas growled before drying up.

It was far from over yet…

Chapter Seven

"It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

1 Corinthians 13:7 (BSB)

While the many lifeforms kept on having some cheerful fun in the large living room, Sandra was still pacing around the hallways in her large home, her mind full of worrying thoughts about her friends.

Despite seeing Celljoy and Budsof in the photograph that the butterfloat had given her, it has been an additional hour since and it was now nearing 11 PM. One of the starvelvets crawled around the hallway and saw the concerned woman. It made an adorable cat-like noise, catching her attention.

“Oh starvelvet, I am so worried.” Sandra said, frowning. “I am fearing that those two won’t show up. What if they fell victim to some kind of danger?”

The thick stripey velvet worm wiggled at Sandra and snuggled around her for comfort. She began to cry quietly before hugging the wiggly being in return.

“I know I shouldn’t be feeling like this, but if only such a miracle occurred, we could hopefully see them unscathed.” Sandra cried.

Max, who had been walking in a room nearby, suddenly heard a faint noise: the noise of someone crying in the hall nearby. He frowned worriedly, and headed towards the hall, only to see his distraught wife in tears. He couldn’t help but feel sad as well, but before he could come over and hug Sandra, he suddenly heard a knock on the door.

Rushing to the door, he opened it, where a large yet fluffy giraffe-like being was in view. It was a curlysnug. Its head was peeking at the door, which startled Max. It had a feline smile as its curious eyes looked at the human.

“There’s nothing to be afraid of, I just came to tell you good news.” The curlysnug said cheerfully.

“That’s a-a relief,” Max stuttered awkwardly, “I didn’t expect you to stare at me as I opened the door. What news do you have?”

“The good news is that I saw Celljoy and Budsof, they reached the wooden bridge and they’re on the way here.” The curlysnug replied, “The bad news is the bridge. It broke from the pressure of that huge mountain lion group. But thankfully, both of our friends had made it through.”

Max was surprised by the news, he had to rush back to the hallway to get Sandra. The starvelvet followed behind the woman. Hearing the news, she couldn’t help but continue to hold on hope until they finally came.

“Thank you Lord for protecting them from harm.” Sandra prayed, “If they see any more danger, have someone save them for me.”

—

Now not too far from their destination, the two friends were now feeling much more hopeful than before. Celljoy looked at Budsof with warmth as they continued their trail.

As they continued their walk, they spotted a familiar being. It was Shroombelle, the aurivellae they both saw many minutes ago before crossing the bridge. She was just just sitting on one of the tree branches, possibly after the aurivellae found an alternate path instead of going to the same bridge the two crossed.

“Woah, how did you get here this fast?” Celljoy asked, astounded.

“Hehe, I went to a shorter shortcut.” Shroombelle replied, chuckling.

As she leaped off the tree branch, Shroombelle landed next to them.

“Sadly, I have some really bad news for you two.” Shroombelle continued. “You may not like this, hehe.”

“What’s the bad news?” Budsof asked,

“Unfortunately, your friend had already wrapped up the party. Hehe.” Shroombelle replied, giggling.

This news immediately broke Celljoy to his core. He froze completely next to Budsof like a frozen block of ice. His emotions were now racing around, feeling a sense of sadness and shock. It was over, the party ended and they’re too late.

“You say what?” Budsof asked, stuttering.

“It’s over, you two are too late to get back there.” Shroombelle giggled.

Budsof frowned. He was upset but understood the news. Celljoy on the other hand, was almost on a break of tears. His eyes leaked out tears, a sense of hopelessness.

“I’m terribly sorry to hear that, Shroombelle.” Budsof replied, “Celljoy, I am so sorry for detouring this journey before…”

Celljoy couldn’t speak, he was too broken to even speak.

“Uh, what’s wrong Celljoy?” Budsof asked concerningly.

Celljoy’s emotions changed from sadness to pure frustration instantly. He stared at the aurivellae with tears of anger and disappointment.

“What did you say, mushrump?!” Celljoy asked, voice full of fury.

Shroombelle backed away, not expecting the response the fluffy creature let out.

“I-I said that the party’s done…” Shroombelle stuttered.

Covering his face in shame, Celljoy built up rage before he yelled right at her.

“Why you cankerblossom, no good rascal, filthy rogue, glass-gazing, foul cream-faced loon of a villain, gooseberry eating hugger-mugger, dankish pignut, fat-kidneyed toaster strudel, loving maggot-pie, beetle-headed clotpole, rank measel, elf-skinned footlicker!” Celljoy shouted.

The amount of Shakespearean insults thrown at the large aurivellae was shocking, even in contrast

to Celljoy's Christian faith. Budsof was shocked, and so was Shroombelle herself.

"I cannot even believe that I came all the way with my friend, all for nothing!" Celljoy shouted, "All I wanted is to spend time with Sandra and my other friends back at Janesboro, and yet, you tell me that we're late, didn't you?"

Shroombelle was shaking more, "I-I can explain…"

"Lies before me, base clown!" Celljoy yelled, "Tell me the truth."

"Celljoy, calm down." Budsof comforted. "You don't want to anger the Lord with your fury. It'll be alright…"

Upon hearing the words, Celljoy's emotions slowed down to a whole. His anger turned back into sadness, beginning to sob wholeheartedly.

"If you excuse me, I'll just go down by a lake…" Celljoy cried softly.

He walked away, wanting to be all alone himself. All while Celljoy left, Budsof turned to Shroombelle with understandable anger.

“Shroombelle, why did you have to say such news?” Budsof said, “Why did you even do this to my buddy?

“I…. I was going to tell you both that it was all a joke…” Shroombelle said, frowning with regret. “I swear, what I had told you guys wasn’t even true….”

“Well you should have told him that before blowing his fuse off.” Budsof scolded, “You better apologize to him.”

Feeling a sense of sadness, Shroombelle began to cry softly. She reflected on that and couldn’t help but feel responsible and ashamed.

“I feel like I ruined it for them…” Shroombelle sniffed.

Around the lake, Celljoy was looking at himself in the water that was reflected by the moon. He was singing a hymn softly in between his tears:

"*Jesus loves me, this I know,*
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong.
They are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me,
For the Bible tells me so.

He loves me, whom he died,
Heaven's gate to open wide.
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in."

Budsof softly walked around the lake, seeing his friend tearing up in between his somber singing, feeling sad over this tragic misunderstanding.

"Celljoy… a-are you ok?" Budsof asked softly.

Sniffing, Celljoy turned to see the bud with tears.

"Yeah…" Celljoy sniffed, "I'm just disappointed though, it's over."

"Don't say that…" Budsof said, "What if they're still waiting for us back home? We can't give up this easily, friends stick by their friends. It'll be ok, trust me."

“No, it’s not going to be ok, alright?” Celljoy replied, “This journey is over, it's all done. Never again will Sandra host one again…”

“It’s not what you think…” Budsof said, “Shroombelle told me back there that it was all just a joke. None of it was true…”

“Oh really? Why didn’t that mushrump tell me this before?” Celljoy sighed with disbelief, “This should never have happened had she admitted the truth.”

As they both hugged together for comfort, as a way to cheer up poor Celljoy, Shroombelle came down to see them both, with a sincere apology. She felt sentimental sorrow while trembling a bit. Shroombelle didn’t want to anger Budsof’s friend.

“Celljoy…” Shroombelle sniffed, “I want to apologize to you. I am so sorry from the bottom of my heart, I didn’t mean to make you this upset and angry at me… What I said was meant to be a humorous prank. I never meant for you to take it seriously, I wanted to make you guys laugh… I am regretting what I have done to you guys…”

The aurivellae then began to cry in shame, Celljoy and Budsof couldn't help but feel sad for the poor being. The fluffy eared specimen got up himself and comforted Shroombelle humbly.

"I forgive you." Celljoy replied, accepting her apology sincerely. "I can't bear myself hating someone just because of a joke. The Creator never wanted me to do that. Maybe I shouldn't have berated you in such a fashion. So if you forgive me, Shroombelle, wanna be friends?"

Shroombelle lifted up her bell and looked up at Celljoy with a soft smile. As she got up, the aurivellae then hugged him.

"I forgive you too." Shroombelle replied, "Thanks, friend."

"You're welcome." Celljoy said, softly smiling as his tears dried up.

Budsof then got up and proceeded to join the hugs, which gave them a sense of warmth and forgiving peacefulness that not even the cold snow could affect their body temperature.

Suddenly, soon afterward, one of the starvelvets (being Celljoy's) came to see them. How the velvet worm organism came was unknown to Celljoy, but there was a reason why it came.

His starvelvet was feeling alone in Sandra's home and waited for Celljoy's homecoming. But after hours of waiting, the organism couldn't handle it any longer and decided to go out of the house's backdoor and hopped around the forests to go search for its owner.

Sandra had no clue that Celljoy's starvelvet vanished, but when Celljoy, Budsof and Shroombelle saw the organism looking at them, they knew that they're almost home.

"Starvelvet, you came for us!" Celljoy exclaimed happily.

The stripey velvet worm then hopped right onto him and licked his face constantly like an excited puppy dog. Both Budsof and Shroombelle laughed as the licks continued on.

"It looks like it came for us, which means we're not too far away now!" Budsof said, smiling.

The starvelvet looked up to Budsof and nodded happily before hopping off of Celljoy's body. It was wanting to be followed by them as the fluffy eared specimen got up from the snowy ground.

"What are we waiting for then?" Celljoy asked, "Let's all get there, shall we?"

Celljoy began following the large velvet worm while Budsof and Shroombelle hurried up behind him.

"Wait, don't forget about me!" Budsof chuckled.

"Same for me too." Shroombelle giggled.

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As they continued to not only follow the star of Bethlehem still, but also began following behind Celljoy's starvelvet.

As they did, they reached a long lake surrounding a mountain, with forests surrounding it. There was a heavenly glow coming around the area, as well as the aurora borealis still shining colorful lights in the night starry sky. It was the 'mystical' national park as Celljoy promised.

“We did it! We finally reached it!” Celljoy yelled in joy.

“We made it to the national park!” Budsof exclaimed. “I know we could not give up on this.”

“Congratulations guys, this was fast to get here, wasn’t it?” Shroombelle asked.

Celljoy was now staring into space, he was now imagining himself jumping in joy so far up into the stratosphere that he began floating into outer space. He was now clueless, yet Celljoy stared at Earth and the surrounding planets with child-like wonder. But as he continued observing with joy, he suddenly plunged down fast. He fell comically down fast enough that he crashed right into the ground, like one of those classic slapstick cartoons.

Budsof was the one that snapped Celljoy back to reality, out of his imagination.

“Celljoy, a-are you alright?” Budsof asked.

“Oh, y-yeah!” Celljoy stumbled, chuckling. “I was drifting into the deepest reaches of my imagination. I was in outer space.”

Budsof and Shroombelle chuckled together.

As they observe around the national park, they notice that there are a bunch of rocks they need to hop to get there. Celljoy and his starvelvet went first, hopping like a well-balanced ballet dancer, trying not to mess up and fall into the cold freezing waters like the last time. Once he reached the trees, the rest followed doing exactly like what Celljoy and the starvelvet did.

“These are tall trees, huh?” Budsof asked.

“Yep, but that’s because you have never seen this before. We usually take a shortcut away from the national park, especially to Peterborough.” Celljoy replied, “I know you’ll enjoy this.”

His starvelvet was hopping happily around them before leading the way to the area. Celljoy and the others followed around, entering through the abyss of the trees that surround the forest.

It started off dark at first, but as they continued their trail through it, more and more colorful lights were strung around the trees. It was basically like the area they were in hours before, that moment when they first met that amorflow and also the butterfloat flurakin.

It was like a Christmas concert was about to start, with glimmering and shimmering lights pulsing and glowing like fireflies. It seems that whoever placed the lights there used fragments of crystals with phosphoric properties as a sort of light source.

They were amazed, including Budsof. He had the motivation to continue crafting a gift while Celljoy wasn't looking.

"My friend's going to love this." Budsof thought.

As they continue their walk, they suddenly see more and more lifeforms roaming around, including multiple types of starvelvets. Some had wild arrangements of colors in their stripes, while others were glowing in the dark with neon colors. Those velvet worm organisms saw the trio and began to hop around them in pure joy.

“I have never seen these ones before!” Shroombelle said, “I got no idea that they glow in the dark too.”

“That’s because they possess phosphorescent in their stripey bodies.” Celljoy said, smiling. “You don’t see them a lot like this in the wild, even if they have stars that glow on their large tail.”

The starvelvets snuggled up with Celljoy’s own starvelvet by rubbing against the body. They all couldn’t help it, but decided to snuggle up with all the other starvelvets, exactly like in that dream Celljoy had back at the poolhouse.

Shroombelle tried not to have the starvelvets lick her bell so as to not make them sick, all while Celljoy and Budsof enjoyed all the licks.

After they got up, they pet the starvelvets’, patting them around the velvet worms’ heads and antennas. One of the neon starvelvet decided to join alongside Celljoy’s starvelvet. It was a female, perhaps falling in love with Celljoy’s pet.

Once Celljoy and the others reached further, more constructed homes made out of wood began to show up. It was beginning to look like a wooden

village for those lifeforms. Surrounding the large forest village was a little bonfire placed, where many creatures were resting around and telling stories of their own. Kind of like the others at his hometown, which in contrast, were telling stories about the national park.

One of the creatures came around to see Celljoy, opening his mouth to check for any teeth to clean, in case of any potential cavities, while other lifeforms were shaking hands with Budsof and Shroombelle, greeting them with open arms. They were welcomed very well around this village. It no longer felt like a sea of trees surrounding the mountain anymore.

“Isn’t this incredible or what?” Celljoy asked.

“Incredible, you mean amazing!” Budsof replied, “I have never seen this before. The forests in Janesboro don't even hold a candle to this village.”

Celljoy nudged Budsof’s head playfully as he chuckled along.

“Well guys, I gotta get to Janesboro.” Shroombelle said, “But I hope the best for you both. If something happens to either one of you, and I’m

unable to reach out, don't give up hope. I'm not saying that someone will happen to you guys, but I want you to know that if anything bad ever happens to one of you guys, you can reach home. Good luck guys, take care!"

Both friends waved goodbye, while the two starvelvets made cute noises, perhaps saying goodbye, even though it was hard to decipher. They then looked around, only to see some large moss-like lifeforms helping out and taking care of large eggs.

"Whoa, what are they?" Budsof asked curiously.

Going over to see what they are, these elliptical beings peacefully waved to the two.

"These are mossdales, very shy but friendly too." Celljoy said, "They're good caretakers."

As they observed the mossy beings, many of their celestial patterns (including its face) surrounding its body were also formed with glowing luminescent moss as well. Aside from that, their body is very mossy. At night, it is dark mossy blue, but whenever the sun shines on it, it reflects the mossy with a little shiny green hue.

They’re good calmers for whenever someone cries or wants to go asleep. It would sleep alongside anyone and calm them down with some moss that were shaped like glowing stars.

When Celljoy and Budsof observed them, one of the large eggs opened up, revealing that the larvae inside it formed into a crawling yet slimy moth being. They recognized it as a newborn snugmoth, when its body climbed up one of the large trees and held on so the wings could be unfolded.

“Wow, so you moss beings take care of the newborn lifeforms?” Budsof asked.

One of the mossdales nodded happily.

“God bless you, friend.” Celljoy said, smiling.

The mossdale then came at them and proceeded to hug them with their large mossy arms. It smiled at them while Celljoy and Budsof smiled back.

Waving goodbye to the moss beings, they looked around at the village, when Budsof spotted something unusual.

“What’s that stone object over there?” Budsof asked, pointing to a statue next to the bonfire.

“Hmm have no clue, wanna go see it?” Celljoy asked back.

Nodding happily, they went to look and saw the statue. It seemed to be made out of stone, perhaps by many creatures who were assembling the village over the course of a few years. Its top shape was a halo, and was surrounding a cross alongside stone placements of roses and flowers. On the bottom, it had some words:

“Omnia vincit amor”

NATIONAL PARK VILLAGE
WHERE LOVE CAN TRESCEND
EVERYTHING

“What do the words mean?” Budsof asked.

The neon starvelvet chimed in, “Slove sconquers sall.”

“Huh?” Budsof confusingly asked.

“Love conquers all.” Celljoy replied, “Omnia vincit amor is latin for love conquers all.”

The bud then snuggled up together with his friend yet again, feeling a sense of love alongside Celljoy and the starvelvets.

“Let’s not waste much more time, let’s go home.” Celljoy said.

Budsof nodded softly and kindly before they left the village, but not before waving goodbye to the lifeform residents who were living there. And as they did, they went into the dark forests yet again, though not as dark as the previous stretches of forests they had been through before.

Budsof though, wasn’t really sure if he would be welcomed back at Janesboro, because of his unusual yet blessed origins. He could have told Celljoy, but he didn’t want to upset his friend like before. But his judgement got the better of the flowery bud, and so, he poked Celljoy a bit to catch his attention.

“Huh?” Celljoy asked.

“Can I tell you something honestly?” Budsof asked back.

“Sure, but what’s with the sudden mood change?” Celljoy replied, “I thought you’re excited to get back home for Christmas.”

“Well I was, but… I don’t know if I can tell you this but… I’m really shy.” Budsof paused.

“That’s why you’re feeling this way?” Celljoy asked.

“It’s not just that though.” Budsof replied, “It’s just that… I don’t think I actually fit in with the others to be honest.”

“What are you talking about?” Celljoy asked back with concern.

“Well to tell you the truth, while I had friends like you,” Budsof continued, “I actually felt like they never give me much attention compared to your former friend Noah. I’m scared if they’ll do the same thing when we’re back home…”

Celljoy was now feeling sad about what his friend was telling him. He loved him as much as Noah,

he couldn't bear losing his other friend now if Budsof wanted to be alone.

"What if they do care about you too?" Celljoy asked, "I doubt they would not give you much attention, after all, you were blessed as a predecessor to my late friend, to save my sorrow from Noah's passing. I can't lose you too."

"Celljoy… I'm sorry." Budsof cried softly, "I decided not to join behind on the way back. You can go without me, you'll be better off without me…"

He felt a sense of hardship was coming between them, like the journey must have broken them on multiple occasions. Celljoy teared up like Budsof.

"Are you sure?" Celljoy sobbed quietly, "No one should be left behind, especially during this holiday. Not even you…"

"I have no other choice." Budsof sniffed, "I'm deeply sorry about that friend… I didn't want to bring you down like this."

"I understand." Celljoy sniffed before hugging his friend in a farewell. "Goodbye Budsof…"

“Goodbye Celljoy…” Budsof replied, trying to hold back tears.

As they finished up their hug, Celljoy parted with the two starvelvets who were crying about Budsof’s departure. As they walked on their own separate ways, the bud began reflecting on the decision. As he continued on his reflection, he began to break down crying on the snowy ground.

“Who am I kidding?” Budsof cried, “Why did I even say such a tragic thing like that to him?”

Continuing to cry, this caught the attention of something that was coming to him. The large pack of pumas were slowly snarling towards the bud, but not before letting out such a loud hiss, which caught Budsof’s attention.

“Oh no, not you all again…” Budsof quivered.

The pumas then jumped right at the bud, which let out such a loud cry for help. It was so loud that it immediately caught Celljoy’s cautious attention.

“Oh no, Budsof’s in danger!” Celljoy quipped, stopping in his tracks. “Starvelvets, get back to Janesboro, I’ll go over there and save my friend.”

The starvelvets then left on their own to his home, while Celljoy ran to the direction where his friend’s call was coming from. As he looked, the pumas were attacking the bud violently, shredding his leaves with the powerful jaws and teeth.

“NO! BACK AWAY FROM MY FRIEND!” Celljoy yelled.

Grabbing a broken tree branch, Celljoy attempted to swing at the pumas, but the pumas were not afraid. One of the mountain lions grabbed hold on the branch with its jaws and struggled with a tug of war.

As the stick flew out of the lifeform’s hands, the pumas were now instead surrounding Celljoy. They were now more aggressive to the point of letting out harsher roaring at the creature.

“I’m sorry, don’t hurt me. I beg of you…” Celljoy whimpered.

But just before the pumas began plotting its fury onto the Criakin, something sped around the pack and began wrapping one of them around with ribbons. Celljoy looked up and saw a familiar face.

Ribbola was there, here to the rescue. The pumas were now turning their attention to the creature, but Ribbola was ready to deal with them. Its ribbon arms threw that poor puma onto the pack aggressively before defending his friend from much of the mountain lions. The pumas tried to attack, but Ribbola's ribbons began to ambush the pack.

With each hit from the ribbons, the pumas were beginning to be fearful of the creature. It began to meow cowardly before they ran away, never to return again.

Celljoy was breathing so much as he was watching, as he felt like he would have been a victim to the big cats. Ribbola then came around to him and calmfully comforted Celljoy with its ribbon arms.

"You saved my life, but what about Budsof?" Celljoy asked, "We gotta get to him right now."

After getting up, they began running to where Budsof's body was lying on the snowy ground. His bud body was perfectly intact, though had some scars around it. But the green leafy body was in shambles from all the ripping and clawing from the pumas' jaws and claws. His leafy wings and arms were injured from the attack as well.

Miraculously, Budsof was still alive much to Celljoy and Ribbola's relief.

"Budsof… are you ok?" Celljoy asked.

"C-Celljoy, why did you come back for me?" Budsof groaned.

"I heard your cry, I couldn't help but try to defend you from the mountain lion attack." Celljoy sniffed.

Celljoy, feeling worried about his friend's survival, placed his hands and prayed aloud.

"Lord, help us…" Celljoy prayed, sniffing. "My friend Budsof is in such critical condition and I don't know what I'm going to do. Help me please…"

He then hugged around Budsof's body and began to cry, some audible sobs were heard. Ribbola came around and began snuggling up with him, aiding Celljoy with enough comfort to help lessen his tears.

With such strong determination, Celljoy got up and wiped away the tears. He knew that something had to be done, even if he had to sacrifice himself to save his friend.

"Budsof, I'm going to bring you home with me." Celljoy said.

"No, I'm injured. Go without me…" Budsof groaned more.

"I cannot leave you in such a state like this," Celljoy cried, "I gotta do what's right… The Lord doesn't want anyone to be left behind. I'm going to do this because I love you as a brother in Christ…"

Budsof leaked out some tears from his eyes. Celljoy really did give him enough attention after all, he really did care about him.

With enough strength, Celljoy began to carry Budsof while Ribbola aided alongside them. They all walked further into the forest and finally walked out of there.

There it was, Janesboro. They have reached it at last.

Chapter Eight

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially in the family of faith."

Galatians 6:10 (BSB)

As Celljoy continued carrying his friend out of the large forest that inhabited the national park and into the hills around the city of Janesboro, Sandra and the others saw them through the window and ran out to aid them.

It was a frantic scene. Sandra ran as fast as the other creatures to see them. As they reached the two friends, Sandra and the other lifeforms saw the horrifying truth: Budsof was badly injured from the big cats in the forest.

"Oh dear, does anyone have the starvelvets?" Sandra asked worriedly.

The starvelvets (including the neon one from the national park) came to Sandra and spewed out the silk from their mouths for bandages. As they finished spewing the silk out, Sandra and the others began using the silk and thus wrapping it around Budsof's scars and damaged leafy body. It was such a heartbreaking scene for many of those around Celljoy, Budsof and Ribbola.

"I'm sorry… I know you guys are not my friends…" Budsof groaned, drifting into a long sleep as his eyes were closing.

"We're your friends, we care about you a lot like Celljoy too." Calmsnug said.

As Budsof fell into a deep sleep, Celljoy and the others began going down to Sandra's home and placing their friend to rest in one of the decorated bedrooms.

Celljoy walked close to his friend, now sleeping peacefully in a nice king sized bed with blankets, he placed his hand onto the bud's head and looked at him with some tears.

“Rest well, bud.” Celljoy said. “I trust that by the grace of the Lord, you’ll get better soon.”

The fluffy being then hugged his friend, but as he continued his hug, an object, which had previously been concealed amidst Budsof’s leafy body, fell onto the bed.

Confused by what it was, Celljoy looked at it before picking it up for him. It was a finished little gift Budsof had been doing for him, secretly. It was a small figure of Celljoy himself, decorated from top to bottom with Christmas lights.

It was exactly like the statue idea he envisioned to Budsof back at the poolhouse before their journey had begun. Feeling a sense of sadness, Celljoy sniffed.

“I didn’t know you were doing this for me, friend.” Celljoy said, frowning. “Thank you.”

Hugging his bud one more time, Celljoy then walked out of the bedroom and into the outdoors of Sandra’s home. The others, including Sandra, decided to cheer him up, but Celljoy wasn’t feeling sad anymore. Instead, he was feeling a

sense of loneliness once again since Noah died years ago.

“Budsof will be ok, I promise.” Cancarrot assured, “After all, the starvelvet silk has healing properties. You healed Sandra's bullet wounds with that silk before at the hospital, remember?”

“Yeah, but I am not sure about the leafy bud of mine.” Celljoy said, uncertain about what would happen to my friend. “His bottom leafy body is too badly scarred from the mountain lions, I don’t know how he would survive.”

A glow came underneath him. Looking upwards to where the glow is coming from, not only was Angelheart flying above him, but also Athie as well.

“Celljoy, don’t worry about your friend.” The angel said, “He’ll make it alive. No matter what, trust in the grace of the one above. You’re a good friend to him, and what you did to bring him was such a good deed. I’m happy for you.”

As Angelheart bid them farewell and said Merry Christmas, flying away and vanishing up in the starry sky, Athie came to see him too.

“What wrong, friend?” Athie asked.

“Well it's about my friend, Budsof.” Celljoy answered.

“Celljoy’s feeling a sense of worry regarding the survival of his friend.” Sandra followed.

Athie, feeling sad from seeing Celljoy in such a worrying state, began to hug him with its large winged body.

“Be not afraid, Celljoy.” Athie comforted, “Budsof survive, don’t stop hope in you.”

“You’re such a sweet little thing, Athie.” Celljoy said, softly smiling. “Thanks, wanna join the party also?”

Feeling a sense of happiness from the winged being, Athie then hopped and hugged Celljoy more before flying into Sandra’s front door. The others chuckled along.

As Celljoy looked around the outside scenery, where the cities and forests surround the town of

Janesboro, suddenly he saw a group of other lifeforms coming down from the forest.

He saw those familiar beings from their journey: the grempom, Shroomie and Shroombelle, the mail deliverer calmsnug, amorflow, butterfloat, budchest, both Strawberry Fire and Star Pineapple flurakins, algaeblob, flowermoth, the many herds of cudflies, and many more.

Not only did the two flurakins come, they also brought along the fire, electric, ice and nature flurakins with them as well, perhaps for some company as well.

However, Celljoy noticed that Ti-Q wasn't part of the group. It worried him, especially because he did his best to cheer up the poor robotic organism with hopes about her parents.

"What if Ti-Q had vanished?" Celljoy thought to himself, "I don't want to be scared, but I don't also want to fear the worst for that poor organism. I just hope soon she'll show up. I hope that even those mountain lions didn't try attacking it either. It's bad enough it harmed my friend. Maybe I shouldn't think much, I should just hold onto some hope."

Sandra was delighted, so did the others who saw them. Greeting them with open arms, they entered back inside her home.

Back inside, they began to celebrate the holiday party once again with joyous celebration. Not because of the creatures that came, but also because of Celljoy and Budsof's return.

Though Celljoy himself was still feeling uncertain, not only because of Ti-Q's sudden absence, but also about his friend.

As he went upstairs again and around the door of the bedroom where Budsof was resting, Celljoy placed one of his large ears onto the door to hear if Budsof got up or not. All he was hearing was snoring, perhaps feeling much better from all of that starvelvet silk applied around his leafy exterior.

As Budsof crafted him a gift secretly, he then decided to do one himself for his bud too, even if it takes him a while before his friend wakes up. Celljoy went downstairs and brought Sandra into the kitchen for a second.

“So Sandra, I gotta go to the underground home for a second.” Celljoy said.

“Oh, what’s the reason for that?” Sandra asked.

“Well, to be truthful, I want to craft something for my friend.” Celljoy said, smiling softly to the human.

Sandra smiled back and hugged him before the being went to the backdoor, but not before the two starvelvets followed him, just in case there was any dangerous wildlife in the two forests.

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The glow coming from the neon starvelvet, whose body and stripes had glowed brightly, alongside Celljoy’s starvelvet’s starry tail glowing up, it was much more safer for Celljoy with the glow as they reached one of the two Janesboro forests, even though he still had the two little flashlights in his pocket.

The moon shone across the trees and trail paths as they eventually reached the wooden elevator. The lifeforms around Celljoy and the two starvelvets were sleeping and hibernating, except for the other

kinds of the velvet worm organisms that were snuggling on top of each other. And the gardens that were prominent in the forests were packed away because of the snow.

Pressing the wooden button, Celljoy waited for the elevator to rise out of the ground, all while the two starvelvets rubbed around Celljoy's fluffy legs like cats. Celljoy smiled at them and petted their thick antennas on their heads.

Then the elevator came up, letting out a cheerful Christmas tune. It was now decorated with homemade ornaments and garments, not as woody as how it usually is before.

"Perhaps they're just hoping that Santa Claus would come over to drop them presents, he he." Celljoy joked.

Going inside with the two big starvelvets and pressing the button, the elevator went underground.

As they reached the bottom, the doors opened up, revealing some creatures chilling around and watching some Christmas specials. They were sipping on some hot chocolate and egg nog as they

continued to watch through the old television that Noah brought years ago.

One who was there was Don himself, the pastor. And the other who was next to the pastor was the bright warm astraburst, a big snuggly star that resembled a sun with large appendages behind it and two halos.

“I didn’t know you guys were still here, I thought it was all deserted.” Celljoy chuckled.

The starvelvets playfully made cute noises, sounding like small bursts of barking.

“Well some of the creatures still wanted to chill around here after being in Sandra’s house for long, waiting for you and Budsof.” Don said, smiling.

“How is Budsof doing?” The astraburst asked.

“Well, he’s in bad shape because of the mountain lions. But I hope he’ll be all fine and healed soon.” Celljoy replied, now feeling confident.

“That’s horrible, what are you doing at the moment?” The bananail asked.

“Well I just came over to come up with a little gift for Budsof.” Celljoy said back, “I want to make him happy as he had made a gift for me secretly, so I could do one for him in secret as well.”

When Celljoy told them about the gift, they decided to help him out with coming up for a sincere gift. It took a while, finding materials such as firewood (they usually have so much for warmth and comfort), wax and even materials from the cudflies.

The large insect beings were very helpful in crafting Celljoy a gift for Budsof, even as far as providing some of the glitter they used for the tasty treats they make.

When it was all done, the gift they assembled with the materials. It was a portrait of Celljoy and Budsof together, smiling and looking up, all while halos were around their heads. It was such a beautiful gift that it made Celljoy smile with some tears.

“I hope Budsof will love what we just made.” Celljoy said, smiling.

They decided to show it to some of the creatures, including Celljoy's bunflower at the many areas of the Criakin sanctuary and even outside of the underground home, as a way to show how much work they put in the portrait.

It was also a way to show how much they cared for Budsof, who was still having a peaceful nap in the bedroom. Once Celljoy came back to Sandra's large home, after waving bye to those who helped him, the large fluffy eared sneaked himself up the stairs without Sandra noticing.

Going up to the bedroom, he placed the portrait next to the other side of the bed where Budsof napped, and even included a little handwritten note next to it.

"My beautiful bosom friend, I hope you get up soon to see what I and the others created." Celljoy softly said.

Patting the bud's head, Celljoy then left out of the bedroom and went downstairs, much to Sandra's surprise.

—

Getting up from a long nap many minutes later, Budsof opened up his eyes slowly and looked around. He was inside a nice bedroom, with a large flat-screen television that was in his view, a table and some desks. Surrounding himself was a large king sized bed.

“Am I in a hospital?” Budsof thought, “Where am I?”

Budsof looked up and noticed that his bottom half of the body was wrapped up in some silk. He never felt so much better compared to before when he was attacked by the big cats.

He then inspected his own fluffy bud body, revealing that those scars are also bandaged in the same silk.

“Did those beings help me?” Budsof asked, “And where’s Celljoy?”

Looking on one of the sides however, he saw something beautiful on the desk. It was a beautiful portrait of himself alongside his friend Celljoy. He was smiling there, so was Celljoy. It looked a bit rough from the materials from the looks of it, but it still was such a beautiful work of art.

Budsof began to tear up with joy, and held up the portrait with admiration. Perhaps after all, they all cared for the bud.

“W-who made this?” Budsof asked, sniffing happily.

As he kept on holding the portrait however, there was a letter he almost missed on the same desk. Putting down the portrait without dropping it, he grabbed the letter and opened it up. It was handwritten, complete with a little homemade stamp applied on the bottom.

“Dear friend,

I and the others have decided on helping out a little gift for you. We all care about you bud, and nothing will stop us from loving and caring you very much. We all feel sorrowful for the injuries you have endured from the lions, and I hope you rest.

Godspeed to you my friend.”

Budsof had been re-reading this letter three times in such quick succession. His eyes lit up like stars

once more, feeling a sense of warmth in his heart. Maybe there was a question that would penetrate his consciousness like an arrow of hearts: Celljoy was behind this?

“Did Celljoy do this for… for me?” Budsof asked.

Looking up at the portrait once again, Budsof knew he had to get up and embrace his friend once again. There was only one advantage for that, his body was healing up, and thus, he could get up and walk without much pain. He would have to get up - now.

He was certain of one thing: Regardless if Celljoy or someone else made the portrait, the bud must go down and hug the fluffy being. In an almost dreamlike state, Budsof hopped down from the bed and opened the door.

He peeked out of the door slowly before walking out of there and hopped downstairs without a problem. Budsof was smiling now as he spotted Celljoy with the other beings, Sandra and Max.

“Celljoy.” Budsof said.

Celljoy's fluffy ears perked up as high as possible, hearing the recognizable cheerful voice from the other side. Alongside the others, he turned around and saw Budsof standing there, holding the letter. His eyes still had some tears, but he was still happy.

"Did you make that gift… for me?" Budsof asked, smiling.

Celljoy ran and proceeded to lift up the bud and hugged him.

"Oh Budsof, I did." Celljoy replied, "I saw your gift you did for me in secret and I wanted to do one for you too."

"You do care." Budsof sniffed.

"Of course we do, we all care." Sandra followed.

"We're friends, we stick together like friends." Calmsnug followed soon after, its halo was now glowing brightly around the large bell-like hair around its body.

Budsof kept on hugging Celljoy continuously, all while the other lifeforms followed soon after,

where they hugged Celljoy and Budsof too in harmony.

“Thank you Lord.” Budsof said, lifting his leafy arms together, “Amen.”

—

After this wholesome and heartwarming scene, the party continued on now. Many cudflies were now flying around, preparing for the turkey and sweet deserts, while the other ones of its kind were decorating the large tree with the other lifeforms. Celljoy was also in the kitchen, while Budsof was chilling alongside him.

“Celljoy, are you hungry for what they’re making tonight?” Budsof asked curiously.

“To be honest, I’m hungry for the turkey.” Celljoy replied, “I bet it will be delectable and delicious.”

Licking around his mouth with delight, Celljoy could not help but imagine having a large supper where they had a large amount of bread, cranberry sauce, lots and lots of gravy, potatoes and stuffing.

Sandra, Max and the other cudflies were now preparing dishes full of the food and passed each dish around to the other lifeforms, including Budsof and Celljoy. Each corner of the walls was decorated with many garments with homemade lights shining colorfully around the large kitchen.

The cudflies' large butterfly-like wings were flapping as fast while they had the dishes in each arm, passing them across the table for the others to eat. The music playing was glorious and magical, with beautiful Christmas songs and hymns playing next to the firewood, where some cudflies were singing the lyrics.

It was such a beautiful vision for the fluffy eared lifeform, Budsof couldn't help but also imagine the same thing like Celljoy. Sandra came in to see what they were thinking of.

"Say, can I check out the fridge?" Celljoy asked.

"Sure, suit yourself, friend." Sandra replied.

Celljoy went to the fridge and looked around it. There was the usual stuff, such as eggs, sausages, cheese, coffee, strawberries, grapes, pineapple,

ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and even hot sauce. The last one caught the lifeform's attention.

"Is that hot sauce?" Budsof asked.

Celljoy looked around the container, revealing a large label and large doses of red hot sauce contained. Perhaps Max uses this sauce to help his sinuses when eating hot food.

Opening up the container itself, he smells the sauce and was caught by surprise by how strong it smelt.

"Uh Celljoy, I don't think it is a good idea to try some." Budsof quipped.

"What's the worst that could happen?" Celljoy asked, chuckling.

Trying out the hot sauce himself, he didn't feel much at first. Then without warning, the large fluffy ears and mouth began expelling a large amount of smoke. He was now burning up from the inside.

Going crazy, Celljoy frantically ran around the kitchen for some water. Searching for some cold

ice water was tough however, as he couldn't see any inside the fridge or freezer. Budsof was now worried about his friend, and decided to get some snow from the outdoors.

"Are you alright?" Sandra asked, laughing.

She was trying not to laugh so hard, but her puffed up cheeks were letting out such a racket, even the cudflies joined into the laughter. In fact, the other lifeforms were laughing louder, which almost caused the other neighbours to call the police for some noise complaints.

Eventually Celljoy eventually went into the living room and spotted the large water fountain, where a jug was installed. Grabbing the large jug with all his strength, he ran outside of the house and dumped a large amount of water into his mouth in such a stupendous fashion, he almost choked from how much water he was drinking. Budsof had a large amount of snow in his leafy arms, so when Celljoy emptied the jug into his mouth, the leafy bud stuffed up the snow into Celljoy's mouth.

Calming down from the spicy dilemma, Celljoy felt a sense of coolness after drinking and swallowing as much water and snow into his body.

Going back inside, the other lifeforms inside were now calming down from bursting into laughter.

“Never again will I have hot sauce again.” Celljoy chuckled awkwardly.

“No worries, it's ok.” Shroomie laughed, “Also I just displayed the art I did for you and the bud.”

Celljoy smiled at the aurivellae and hugged her alongside Budsof as well. Seeing the displayed artwork for Celljoy and Budsof on the wall, they were happy that Shroomie did something for them, even without noticing before seeing her the first time.

When the fluffy eared lifeform roamed around the large house, he suddenly stumbled upon the bottom stairs behind the stairs that led to the bedrooms and bathrooms.

Celljoy’s curiosity got the better of him and opened up the door that led to the stairs. And as he did, he ended up going to the basement underneath the home. The curiosity was strong, though Celljoy was also cautious too. Especially if he saw something that he didn’t like seeing, like posters that glorify monsters or even objects that were

said to be demonic. Once he was setting his barefoot onto the cold basement ground, Celljoy spotted lots of boxes spread around the room, some stacked.

“Perhaps Sandra had some interesting things that could pique my interest.” Celljoy thought.

He crouched down and began opening one of the boxes. And as he did so, Celljoy spotted something that catched his attention. There were many magazines inside the box, but they’re not just magazines. They were old television guide magazines, containing TV listings, advertisements and other sorts of articles and recipes.

Picking one of the magazines up, Celljoy realized that the magazines were stapled, which curiously made him giggle playfully. When he flipped through, Celljoy peeked open the guide, where tons and tons of old television listings filled up the pages.

The amount of programming back in the day, as well as a wide arrange of Christian programming, was making Celljoy’s child-like wonder grow progressively.

“Is this how many people watched television back in the day?” Celljoy asked, “Did Christians watch television back in the day as well?”

Celljoy couldn’t help but suddenly widen his smile, feeling a warmth in his heart.

“The Creator must have given His love to those who placed their creativity and talent into not just art, literature and music, but also on TV.” Celljoy observed, “It’s like sharing a piece of our faith. It’s not only entertainment for people to enjoy…”

Celljoy was captivated – the listings were very interesting. It was like a time capsule from the past, where television used to be innocent and possessing a sense of wonder. He began laughing with as much joy as Celljoy continued turning each page.

The joyful laughter caught Sandra’s attention and went into the basement, where the noise was coming from. As she looked, Celljoy was cheerfully laughing from looking at the magazines.

“Aw Celljoy, are you looking at those old television guides?” Sandra asked, smiling.

Celljoy turned to see her, smiling.

“Yes, they’re so wonderful.” Celljoy replied. “It’s like a capsule from the past, is this how TV used to be?”

“Of course, the TV station I work at was my childhood station when I was young.” Sandra replied, nodding.

“Really?” Celljoy asked, as his eyes shone brightly.

“Yep, and it used to sign off a lot daily.” Sandra replied, “Just like most television stations though, that was changed when infomercials came eventually.”

“Did it also do religious programming too?” Celljoy asked, “If so, I’d love to watch those if they’re recorded on tape.”

“They did, especially the meditational ones they show before singing off.” Sandra answered, “I used to also watch those too before going to sleep. They have a lot of deep, strong messages,

especially the truth that my Heavenly Father loves us all, even if we do something wrong."

"That's really nice, take a look at this." Celljoy said, smiling as he then held up one of the guides.

"This must be a rapper who starred in a television sitcom." Sandra said, "You know, the one who resided in a mansion at Bel-Air."

Celljoy giggled, interests piqued even further.

"Well I gotta go back up to make some hot chocolate for everyone. I'll see you after, friend." Sandra said, smiling. "God bless you, friend."

She walked back upstairs, all while Celljoy continued to be fascinated with the old television guides, where many of the issues from the 1980s and 1990s were his favorite.

"You know what, I gotta learn more about old television," Celljoy said, "Perhaps there's more in the other boxes."

The lifeform then looked around in the other boxes, which were mostly personal items that Sandra was keeping around, such as photo frames,

other assortment of literature and old Bibles, crafting supplies, old empty sketchbooks, old worn out shoes, and other items that weren't much of interest for Celljoy.

When he returned back to the box of television guides, Celljoy decided to read more of them with curiosity. This caught both his friend Budsof and Sandra by surprise as they went back downstairs.

“Celljoy, what are you reading?” Budsof asked, smiling.

“Just reading those nice television guides from back in the day.” Celljoy replied.

Sandra and Budsof giggled, especially when Celljoy showed them some fascinating print advertisements.

“Wanna come back up, buddy?” Budsof asked.

“Sure thing, wanna read them with me someday?” Celljoy replied.

Budsof nodded happily and Celljoy followed them both back up the stairs.

Chapter Nine

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced with great delight."

Matthew 2:10 (BSB)

As midnight reached, the party wasn't wearing off anytime soon. Many cudflies were becoming cheerful carollers, equipped with their own fluffy earmuffs, as they flew out of Sandra's home and sang across the town, much to their surprise, despite being around late morning.

Winthrop Lynch, the station manager of CJBY-TV, was in his office when the cudflies began singing around his window. He was astounded but also amazed, feeling a sincere warmth in his heart, which led him to hiring a news reporter for a broadcast about the carollers.

The news reporter they had hired, since Sandra and Max were still at home for the party, was Miguel Ravia, one of CJBY-TV's top professional reporters alongside the aforementioned Sandra Mallory.

"This is a CJBY-TV special report, where dozens and dozens of cheerful cudflies are now flying around and singing songs to those spending their time at home," Miguel said, "I guess these cudflies are like those people that sang Christmas songs at people's houses. Many colorful insect lifeforms indeed, don't you agree?"

The other reporters agreed with the remark Miguel had made before they went to the meteorologist, reporting a calm snow storm that would arrive early morning.

Meanwhile, behind Sandra's home, there's a giant pool that anyone could swim in. But since it was winter, the water was almost frozen, only a thick layer of ice was covering it.

A part of the ice cracked open to reveal the familiar watery creatures, since their newly installed pipes allow any lifeforms to come in without any sort of danger.

It was jellybounce, melodia, solisfish, Maia and Ielle again. They were hoping to see Celljoy and Budsof again after being gone for a long time. But after waiting for a while, the large jellyfish crawled out of the broken ice, and right onto the surface, opening the back door with its large tentacles.

The others were surprised to see the familiar jellyfish, especially Sandra, Max and of course Celljoy. Budsof was just in the living room, watching some Christmas specials with the other lifeforms.

“Hey guys, what’s up?” Jellybounce asked.

“Nothing much, how did you guys get here?” Sandra replied.

“Well from those new large pipes of course, it helped out a lot for us to swim through.” Jellybounce giggled.

“Especially me, hehe.” Solisfish giggled back.

“Jellybounce, nice to see you after a while.” Celljoy said.

“It’s my pleasure, I brought along my friends too.” Jellybounce said.

When Celljoy got out at the back door alongside jellybounce’s large gelatin bell and large balls around it, he saw the familiar faces of melodia, Maia and Ielle.

“Hi friend.” Ielle cheered.

“It’s nice to see you all too. I’m surprised you came over, Sandra would be dazzled to see you two also.” Celljoy said, smiling.

Ielle leaped out of the water like a fish and landed on the ground with its feet. Despite being a shark, he could breathe well out of the water. Maia followed suit, while jellybounce and melodia giggled.

Sandra went out to see what’s going on, where she was taken by surprise with the assortment of sea lifeforms around Celljoy.

“Hey Sandra, this is Maia and Ielle, they’re usually timid.” Celljoy said.

Both of them waved hello peacefully with a smile.

“Wanna come in for the party?” Sandra asked.

“We could for a bit, I don’t mind.” Ielle replied.

As they were going to go inside however, the bushes moved suddenly, catching their attention really quick. As they watched continuously, the two figures came out of the bushes.

One was with lots of pink fluff and sticks of candy and another looked similar to solluxes, but with orbs as lights around the upper cover instead of gems.

“Woah, did you two watch us over?” Celljoy asked.

“Not really, I was just curious about this house and so my friend and I decided to check it out.” It giggled.

“Who are you two?” Ielle asked.

“I’m Sweetfluff, and the one on the right is Solit.” It said, smiling.

Sweetfluff stuck its tongue out in a silly way before climbing up and going around Celljoy's back playfully.

"That tickles." Celljoy giggled.

"Is it nice inside?" Solit asked.

"Yeah, you'll love the party we have inside. Wanna see?" Sandra asked.

Solit nodded and hopped happily inside the back door, alongside Ielle, Maia, Celljoy and Sandra. Jellybounce decided to go back into the pool, but not on leaving, they decided to hang out with the melodia together playfully for Christmas.

Going inside, the atmosphere was warm and cozy with a nice electronic fireplace in the living room next to the flat-screen television, a large couch and coffee table, and a big assortment of compact discs for some listening pleasure. Maia couldn't help herself and sat on the comfy couch alongside Budsof and the others.

Ielle giggled as she watched the cudflies with wonder in her large eyes. Her tail wagged joyfully when a cudfly offered her a little pastry to eat.

“Precious, isn’t it?” Celljoy asked.

“You could say that again.” Sandra replied, smiling.

—

Around the time when Sandra and the others came into the living room, the cheerful amorflow picked up a star from one of the boxes that had Christmas decorations, and flew up to hang it on top of the tree.

“Nice, that’s really sweet of you.” Budsof said.

“Thanks, I’m grateful to help out.” Amorflow said, smiling.

As soon as the angelic lifeform applied the star, Celljoy and the others assembled his friends, alongside Budsof, Sandra and Max. They were wondering what Christmas movies they could watch tomorrow, perhaps something funny, cheerful and entertaining.

“What should we watch tomorrow while opening our presents?” Celljoy asked.

This led to those around him to choose out a movie, many wanting Christmas comedy classics, others wanting Christmas animated films, and a few wanting a certain action film that had Christmas in it (ya’ know, the one taking place at a skyscraper).

“I thought that was an action film, not Christmas-y per se." The grempom chuckled.

Those including the flurakins, cudflies, Shroomie, Smitty, and others voting which movies would suit well for Christmas. Eventually they picked the most well known ones.

“Say, perhaps to bring in the Christmas spirit, we could go to our special Christmas tree in our forests, shall we?” Calmsnug asked.

“Yeah, what about you Sandra?” Celljoy asked.

“That would be nice, we’ll return to have some turkey since it's now cooked.” Sandra replied, smiling.

So they all went out of her home and into their forest, where they gathered themselves around a particularly large tree. It was decorated with many homemade crystal lights around it and filled with their own decorations. In the front, there was a portrait of Jesus, the same one at the devotional room underground.

They all placed their hands together to form and sang in peace and harmony. A hymn was sung while looking at the tree. As soon as they were finished, they began admiring the true meaning of Christmas with their hearts.

“I have to say, the starry sky is really nice to look at, even better with this colorful tree.” Smitty said, smiling.

“Yeah, full of shiny stars.” Budsof followed.

“It’s like seeing a different world, isn’t it?” Ielle said.

“Yeah, that’s true.” Shroomie replied.

“I would love to spread some sweets around in outer space.” Sweetfluff said.

“I’d imagine surfing around the sun, hehe.” The fire flurakin joked.

“You sure know how to make me laugh.” Budsof chuckled.

The fire flurakin smiled. He could have hugged the leafy bud, but he didn’t want to burn his already healing leafy body.

“I hope we can see Santa Claus.” One cudfly said, “It wouldn’t be right without looking at the sky.”

“Ooooh.” Solit said, her eyes lit up like stars.

“Yeah, though the bearded fellow could reach around here, even if we don’t notice it.” Celljoy laughed.

Suddenly, he heard a small noise. His large fluffy ears perked up to hear it.

“What’s that noise?” Celljoy asked.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Budsof laughed, “Oh wait… it sounds like a fuse going off.”

Then out of nowhere, a space pod suddenly crashed right onto the large tree, causing the tree to collapse on the ground tremendously, causing all the decorations and homemade lights to collapse and break.

“Oh no!” Shroomie exclaimed.

“Oh dear!” Budsof stuttered.

They all looked at Shroombelle with suspicion, because of her potential prankster tendencies. However, since the space pod came from above, the aurivella couldn’t be responsible.

“What?” Shroombelle asked.

“Did you crash the tree down with that object?” Celljoy asked.

“I don’t think I am responsible for that though.” Shroombelle replied.

“Guys, wait.” Calmsnug said, “She couldn’t have done it, no one could have done something like this.”

But the words Calmsnug was saying drowned out when some began arguing in a comical fashion. The cudflies tried to calm them down, so did the bananails.

Celljoy however, wasn't seeing the funny side of this. He frowned before walking away from the forest entirely.

"I was trying to make a small joke, when all of a sudden, something fell right into the tree, from the sky." Shroombelle argued, "Calm down, guys."

Budsof looked worried for Celljoy and followed after him, but when he reached Sandra's house, he shut the door.

Sandra, realizing the argument rose even further, decided to step up and quiet it all down.

"Guys!" Sandra called.

The argument stopped, and they all turned to see her. Calmsnug, the cudflies and bananails were surprised that she almost snapped.

"What are you all doing to each other?" Sandra followed, "Don't you all realize that all this

finger-pointing is tearing us apart? You all have made Celljoy sad, he didn't want to see you all act like this. Christmas is supposed to be a celebration of Christ's birthday and spending time with family and friends. It doesn't matter about the presents and food, far from it. What matters is our commitment to be kind to one another. The Lord said to love your neighbour as yourself. We have to love each other humbly and if we can't, then I don't know what will."

Sandra teared up a bit, but Max came around to wipe it off her face.

"I love you, my eternally beloved." Max calmly said.

The lifeforms, including Shroomie, Smitty, the flurakins, etc. began feeling really guilty for arguing and blaming each other. They all apologized to Shroombelle soon after. Calmsnug and the others were smiling softly and hugged Sandra soon after.

"You've done well, friend." Calmsnug said.

"Thanks, but what are we going to do with the tree now?" Sandra asked.

“Perhaps we could get one from the national park.” Shroombelle calmly said.

Pausing a few seconds after, the others agreed and walked to the forests where they would go to the national park and help out with a new tree.

The space pod that crashed the tree however, was now still after landing on the snowy ground. It opened up with lots of smoke, revealing a group of other robotic organisms inside.

—

Meanwhile, back at Sandra’s home, Budsof opened up the door and looked around to find his friend. It was now dead quiet.

“Celljoy?” Budsof asked.

No answer yet, this concerned the leafy bud and so he went upstairs slowly.

As he began walking on the stairs however, the jellybounce and solisfish came flopping and crawling into the backdoor, catching Budsof by surprise.

“What happened? Why is everyone gone?” Jellybounce asked.

“Well they were at the forest to admire a large tree, but something crashed it down and now everyone’s fighting.” Budsof answered, frowning.

“Oh sorry that you had to deal with that.” Solisfish said.

“It’s not just me, it’s also my friend Celljoy.” Budsof replied, “I think he’s hiding in that room I was in before.”

“Well I could come up with you, but I would slide back downstairs even if I tried climbing up.” Solisfish said.

The solisfish’s body was flopping around the floor loudly, especially since it is a large sunfish.

“What about me then? I could come upstairs with you.” Jellybounce asked.

“Sure, but we should be quiet alright?” Budsof answered, “I don’t want to interrupt him if he’s crying.”

The jellybounce nodded and crawled to the stairs behind Celljoy with its large tentacles. Meanwhile, the large blue and yellow solisfish flopped its way back at the backdoor, before hopping right back into the pool, creating a large splash of ice cold water.

Budsof could come up with something else, but he then remembered that Celljoy saw his gift before while Budsof himself was in a deep sleep in one of the bedrooms.

Reaching the hall where the bedrooms are, he and jellybounce opened one of them, where Celljoy was now on the bed, looking up and frowning. It was an unfortunate moment for the criakin.

“Celljoy, are you ok?” Budsof asked.

Celljoy looked over and saw Budsof.

“What’s wrong?” Budsof asked again.

“I’m just sad about myself.” Celljoy said, “The tree’s destroyed and everyone’s blaming each other. I feel like it wouldn’t be fixed at all.”

“No it isn’t, we could still fix it.” Budsof comforted, “After all, we still have the tree downstairs.”

The jellybounce nodded.

“Yeah, but it's not a large one for us to use in the forest.” Celljoy frowned, “I don’t know if anyone could fix it.”

“Shroombelle would have pranked us, but she didn’t intend for a big space pod to crash down into the tree.” Budsof said.

“That’s why?” Jellybounce asked.

“Yeah, that’s why everyone’s fighting.” Budsof answered.

Celljoy sighed with disappointment. Looking at the window where shining stars twinkled like diamonds, he couldn’t help but wonder if they could have made it earlier than before.

Budsof frowned. The bud didn’t want to see Celljoy feel hopeless during this holiday. Walking with his vine-like stubby legs, he came over and hugged his friend.

“I love you, best friend…” Budsof said.

The jellybounce watched as Celljoy sniffed and hugged Budsof soon after. Then a familiar lifeform came around the door, catching the large jellyfish by surprise, a familiar noise of suckers plopping on the floor. It was his starvelvet.

As soon as the velvet worm organism went into the door next to the jellyfish, it crawled across the floor to comfort Celljoy by snuggling around his legs.

“Want to have a little nap?” Budsof asked.

Celljoy nodded and went onto the king-sized bed with his bud friend and the velvet worm organism. The large jellybounce then covered them up with some warm blankets.

Celljoy then turned off the lights and went to sleep.

—

Celljoy was now in a wooden forest, around the spring. Birds chirped around many of the tree

branches and a calming sound of water was reverbing as he got up.

He wandered around peacefully, when suddenly, a butterfly landed on his arm. Lifting it, Celljoy cheerfully smiled. And as he continued to walk, more and more butterflies came around and landed around his squishy fluff.

Then an assortment of nature flurakins were greeting the fluffy-eared being with open arms. One offered a beautiful rosy crown, which Celljoy accepted. The flurakin then applied the crown around the fluff and around his face.

He was now looking beautiful, with many butterflies around his fluff and a crown he wore, it felt like he entered the kingdom of God. Celljoy then looked at what he was seeing, a familiar lifeform in front of him a few feet away.

It was Budsof. The bud himself was also wearing a flower crown around its large fluffy bud body, and many moths were around him.

“Perhaps I could meet him here.” Celljoy thought to himself.

Approaching the bud with patience, Celljoy walked around the dirt path to meet Budsof. The bud turned around to see the fluffy-eared being with a smile on his face.

“Hello bud.” Budsof said.

Celljoy placed his hand in front for a handshake. Budsof looked with curiosity before holding out his leafy arm in return. Their hands shook together and held on while they walked. The sun was now going down, when some snow-filled clouds began filling up the sky.

One by one, snow began falling from the sky, and the butterflies flew away from Celljoy. Same with Budsof, where the moths flew away to hibernate. The crowns were still around their heads, but now began piling up some snow as the flurries softly fell upon them.

“Could this all be a dream?” Celljoy asked.

Budsof looked at his friend and nodded, hugging Celljoy.

—

The dream suddenly ended when a familiar aurivella woke them up.

“Wake up guys.” Shroomie said, smiling.

Budsof opened up his eyes first, recognizing the lifeform instantly.

“Huh, what?” Budsof asked.

“There’s a surprise for you two.” Shroomie replied.

“Really…” Budsof said, “Celljoy, wake up.”

After some taps, Celljoy’s eyes opened up and looked at his friend. He was confused about what's going on, especially with the lights turned off in the bedroom. Turning on the light, he saw Budsof, starvelvet and Shroomie.

“Huh, what’s going on?” Celljoy asked.

“Shroomie said that there’s a surprise for us.” Budsof replied, smiling.

Shroomie couldn’t help but laugh cheerfully.

“I just said that already.” Shroomie laughed.

“Oh right!” Budsof chuckled, “What are we waiting for?”

“Alright.” Celljoy said, smiled softly.

—

Once Celljoy, Budsof and Shroomie came downstairs alongside the stripy velvet worm lifeform, they walked out the door, when the two saw a trail. There were colorful lights on both sides.

Not only that, but the snow began falling on the ground softly. As it went over the colorful lights, it gave off a nice colorful glow around the white snow.

“Woah, where would this lead us to?” Celljoy asked.

“Wait and see, my friends.” Shroomie replied, smiling.

They soon follow the lengthy trail, which leads them out of the town of Janesboro and right into

the forest. Budsof and starvelvet were feeling a rush of excitement.

“Now close your eyes guys, it's a surprise.” Shroomie inquired.

Closing their eyes, Celljoy was now smiling, so too was Budsof and starvelvet. Though with starvelvet, the velvet worm organism used its antennas to cover its eyes.

As they reached where the trail was leading them to, Shroomie made sure they didn’t go off the trail by accident because they had their eyes closed.

“Now, you can open your eyes.” Shroomie said.

Opening them up now, they were suddenly blown away by what they were seeing. An even larger tree was now in their view, so tall that any aircraft could see it. It was filled up with the same crystal lights and decorations. It surprised both Celljoy and Budsof, even the velvet worm creature was hopping cheerfully.

“How is this possible?” Celljoy thought, “It looks almost similar to the tree that was destroyed.”

Celljoy teared up a bit as he smiled and observed the tree. The Jesus portrait survived the fall and was used around the tree, just to show how much the lifeforms cared about the true meaning of Christmas.

“Wow, y-you did this for me and my friend?” Celljoy asked, sniffing.

“This is incredible!” Budsof exclaimed.

“Not just me, but also with others too.” Shroomie replied, “You can come out now, everyone.”

The others walked out to see Celljoy and Budsof, including Sandra and Max. Even the friendly mossdales came around with their celestial smiles.

“Surprise!” Everyone said in unison.

Celljoy sniffed happily and embraced Sandra with a big hug.

“Thank you all so much, it was really nice of you.” Celljoy sniffed, “I had never thought you guys would do this over an hour. This is the most beautiful present ever.”

“Glad to hear that.” Ielle said, smiling.

“Me too.” Maia followed.

The cudflies flew around the tree, placing the garments they created around the tree and made cute cheerful noises as they flapped their large wings.

“I’m sorry for all of what happened, Celljoy.” Shroombelle said, “I know I didn’t do anything wrong and even if I did do a prank, it wouldn’t be severe.”

“No worries, I forgive you.” Celljoy replied, “But what was that space pod that came down?”

“That doesn’t matter, you’re all so kind everyone.” Budsof said, smiling.

The bud hugged one of the cudflies that flew down. Everyone chuckled and as they looked up at the sky, the clouds opened up a bit to reveal the star of Bethlehem.

“That’s the Christmas star.” Celljoy said, “the Star of Bethlehem.”

“Wowie, that looks shiny.” Shroomie said.

Perhaps she didn’t see the star when going to Janesboro, nor any of the ones Celljoy and Budsof encountered on their way here, so it was a surprise for them, especially Shroomie.

“You could say that again, Shroomie.” Smitty said.

Solit and Sweetfluff, as well as Maia and Ielle, were now feeling a child-like wonder. Their eyes lit around the glowing star with amazement.

The butterfloat flurakin borrowed Sandra’s camera once again to snap a photo of the star, but without any of the flash. The flurakin took it before the clouds closed up afterward.

As they continued to admire the tree and pray with their hearts, Celljoy suddenly heard a familiar shy-sounding voice on the right. He turned and saw the familiar organism, Ti-Q.

“Oh, uh… hey.” Ti-Q shyly asked.

“Hey Ti-Q!” Budsof said, “How did you get here?”

“A curlysnug had helped me get here.” Ti-Q said, “With help from Butterbun.”

Suddenly the large bunny-like messenger flew around the forest and looked at the group.

“Hey, Ti-Q.” Butterbun said.

“Huh?” Ti-Q asked.

“Come over, we have a gift for you!” Butterbun replied, smiling.

“Really?” Ti-Q asked curiously.

The organism turned around, where it saw a group of other robotic organisms in view. It was Ti-Q’s family…

“Mom? Dad?” Ti-Q asked, “Family!”

Ti-Q sobbed as she ran and embraced her family. The others looked at them with warmth.

“Daughter!” Rem-R said.

“Oh Ti-Q, I thought we'd never see you again.” Sa-R followed.

“Oh, how much I missed all of you.” Ti-Q sniffed, “Glad you came! I have also made new friends as well.”

“Really?” Sa-R asked.

“Yeah, there they are.” Ti-Q replied, pointing to Celljoy and Budsof.

“I was right, didn’t I?” Celljoy asked, smiling. “I told you they would find you.”

Ti-Q smiled warmly, “Thank you Celljoy.”

“You’re welcome, friend.” Celljoy said.

After hugging for a little longer, Ti-Q and her family looked at Celljoy and the others with kindness.

“And about what happened before, we’re deeply sorry about before.” Rem-R said, “Our pod system failed when we got to Earth, so it accidentally crashed into that tree.”

“That explains why, but it’s all forgiven.” Budsof said.

“Thanks, shall we relax with you all?” Sa-R asked.

“Sure!” Celljoy replied.

Everyone else agreed and they all relaxed alongside the tree, watching the sky as snow continued to fall around them.

Celljoy then felt something flap behind his back. It was his wings, it began moving.

“Guys, look!” Celljoy called, “My wings!”

Could it be that what Celljoy said back at the poolhouse came true? It couldn’t be, Celljoy couldn’t help but smile and laugh with so much joy.

Flapping his wings, Celljoy began to fly around his friends, surprising everyone, even Sandra. Budsof’s leafy wings also began flapping too before flying alongside Celljoy.

“This is incredible!” Budsof laughed.

Flapping their wings together, both Celljoy and Budsof embraced for a hug. The cudflies then flew up around them and hugged the trio.

“These are the best Christmas gifts.” Celljoy said, smiling, staring at his flapping wings and the large tree they assembled together.

Going back down with their wings slowing down their flaps, Celljoy placed his hands together, he looked up at the cloudy snowy sky as Celljoy thanked the Lord with gratitude and harmony.

“God’s in his heaven, all is right in the world.” Celljoy whispered.

Shortly after, they went back home and began to feast on the turkey. The many cudflies began serving up as many plates Sandra has with the turkey, stuffing, potatoes and gravy. Vegetables are also part of the meal. They placed as many plates on the tables where many of the criakins were about to eat.

Before they began eating however, Celljoy is the first one to do a prayer for everyone. Bowing their

heads down and with their hands up, Celljoy began doing his prayer for everyone.

“Before we go have this turkey, I want to thank the Lord for the good things we have in the world, the food, the family, the everlasting love and the kindness from everyone around me.” Celljoy prayed, “I’m grateful to you and Jesus, and I wish life treats us all kind with guidance and grace. Bless this food and drink for all of us to enjoy as we have a wonderful Christmas. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

They all said amen alongside the fluffy-eared lifeform, and once they finished up with the Lord’s prayer, they began eating.

They all had a wonderful supper, especially for Sandra and her husband Max, who they kissed together. As they finished up their plates, they got full and chilled around to watch some Christmas specials.

After their bodies digest the food they had, Celljoy and the other lifeforms went upstairs to go to sleep. It was going to be like a sleepover for everyone. Many cudflies piled up on each other like nurse sharks, the starvelvets snuggled up

together and slept, their stripy long wormy bodies matching each of them, including the glowing neon starvelvet, and many including Celljoy and Budsof were on their king-size beds, ready to call it a night.

“Good night everyone, and God bless you all.” Celljoy said, smiling.

Once he turned off the light, Celljoy and the rest of the lifeforms drifted off to sleep, and so did Sandra and Max.

The house was now dark, except that a few solluxes and Solit were used as night lights while they were asleep.

However, not long before they went to sleep, they left out some cookies and milk, in case Santa Claus did come down and enjoy both before placing the presents around the tree.

But even if they couldn’t hear him, they all slept peacefully throughout the night.

The Next Morning

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good: His loving devotion endures forever."

Psalms 107:1 (BSB)

As the morning arrived, the snow was still falling from the puffy, white clouds. Now it piled onto various buildings, tree branches, building signs, etc. It looked like a true winter wonderland.

Celljoy slowly opened up his eyes and looked around, the bedroom was now bright, and around him, there were many lifeforms sleeping. And on his side, Budsof was sleeping too, perhaps dreaming of candy canes and sweet lanes of chocolate.

"Budsof, wake up bud." Celljoy whispered.

Celljoy nudged his friend a few times until Budsof woke up and slowly turned over to see his friend.

“Celljoy, what day is it?” Budsof asked.

Getting up slowly, Celljoy observes a calendar that is on the wall. The calendar was used with notes Sandra applied, as a way to countdown the days till Christmas came. The last note was on the 24th. Now it was on the 25th of December.

“Could it be?” Celljoy asked softly.

Budsof peeked outside the window, where snow continuously fell from the clouds. He jumped with joy, so did Celljoy as he soon woke up the other lifeforms.

“It’s Christmas!” Celljoy yelled.

Going out of the bedroom, he woke up the cudflies, starvelvets and bananails, as well as Sandra and Max.

“It’s Christmas, honey.” Sandra said, smiling.

As he rushed down the stairs, Celljoy saw that the tree was filled with presents. But not just presents,

they’re not bought from the store. Maybe the other criakins outside Sandra’s house helped out with their own presents.

“Guys, come down!” Celljoy called.

The lifeforms all went downstairs and gathered around the tree. They all unwrapped their presents and were happy with what they got.

“Who came up with these gifts?” Sandra asked.

“I’m wondering myself, those don’t look like they came from a store.” Celljoy replied.

Reading the tags on one of the presents, it came from a certain pastor:

From: Don Sutherland
To: Celljoy

His eyes widened and with wonder, he opened up the present. It was the exact notebook Don used to document the lifeforms.

“Wow!” Budsof exclaimed, “It looks like the sweet pastor gave you a good gift.”

Opening up the notebook, there was a note folded inside. Unfolding it, Celljoy began reading what it was written:

"Dear Celljoy,

I have decided to give this notebook to you for safekeeping, all of the lifeforms I had documented over the few years have now been published into a book. And because it was published, I no longer needed the notebook. And so, I decided to pass it on to you.

I'm glad to meet you alongside your late friend Noah. And I know that while you miss him dearly, Budsof will at least be by your side, as a reminder of God's love and the care and kindness Noah provided.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and that the Lord would abundantly bless you with his everlasting love.

Sincerely,
Don Sutherland"

Celljoy smiled warmly and hugged the notebook. Despite the loss of Noah Stevenson years ago,

Celljoy now has support from the town of Janesboro, Sandra Mallory, Max Pearlman, and his best friend Budsof.

Even with struggling during their lives, they know that the Heavenly Father is there no matter what and will always love them.

As soon as the lifeforms finished unwrapping their presents, they all joined during the entire day, watching Christmas movies. Sandra and Max joined too, and so did Celljoy and Budsof.

In the end, they all had a wonderful Christmas together. They waved goodbye to the lifeforms that Celljoy and Budsof encountered on their journey back to Janesboro, but not before promising that they'll return anytime to see their friends.

And before they decided on going home, Celljoy and Budsof embraced Sandra and Max with a big hug. They couldn't find the words to tell them how much the trio cared. Budsof felt much better, with the love from his friends he got.

"Good luck and God bless you both." Sandra replied, smiling at them.

Celljoy nodded, so did Budsof. They smiled, raised their hands in farewell, turned around and led their way into the forest. Even if they're going back to their underground home in one of Janesboro's two forests, Celljoy and Budsof will always come to the town anytime to see Sandra and Max again.

“Next Christmas will be wonderful, with all my friends together.” Celljoy said, “I will have so much fun with them next year.”

Over the next couple of days after Christmas, Celljoy and the others go to Sandra’s house with her permission, when they then go downstairs and read the old television guide magazines in the basement. Those around him, including Budsof, were enthralled and fascinated with what they’re seeing.

Calmsnug was particularly interested in public television himself, as did Celljoy and Budsof.

“Aren’t these amazing, bud?” Celljoy asked.

“You’ve said it, friend.” Budsof replied, smiling.

Budsof snuggled with his friend. They will never forget the journey they had embarked on last night.

The joys and sincereness of Celljoy and his friend is theirs and no one could rob them of their own true happiness with the Lord. For them, the journey helped strengthen their friendship, even if their comic shenanigans derailed their path before.

They know that for next Christmas, they'll spend more time with Sandra and Max than ever, alongside his criakin friends without any hassle.

—

POEMS TO THOSE WHO HAVE COMPLETED READING THIS STORY...

True Miracles

In the town of Janesboro,
In the night's silence,
I saw a light.

The sky brighten up with stars,
With a light of hope.

When sadness hurts,
And happiness seems far away,
You came into my heart,
Filling it with love.

You are a true miracle,
With everlasting love,
In a world of pain.

With each heartbeat,
I'll find my way back,
And you'll heal my heart,
With your grace.

You'll hold onto my hand,
Turning my sadness into joy,

As love is wonderful,
It’ll be forevermore.

Through the rain and snow,
With tears of sorrow and pain,
Your joy shined on me,
Like a rainbow.

Like a flowing river,
The love never stops flowing,
Into my heart.

You’re my true miracle,
With an endless amount of joy.

In a world of pain,
You’ll get me through.

With each heartbeat,
I’ll find my way back to you.

As love’s a true wonder,
It’ll be forevermore.

While the night lasts long,

And the cold air never ceases,
You'll keep me warm,
And will never drift away.

You're the hope in my soul,
The journey in my dreams.

We'll rise together,
Even against all odds.

You are a true miracle,
With everlasting love,
In a world of pain.

With each heartbeat,
I'll find my way back,
And you'll heal my heart,
With your grace.

You'll hold onto my hand,
Turning my sadness into joy,

As love is wonderful,
It'll be forevermore.

Hold me tight,

Let the beauty unfold,
Into your arms,
As it’ll never go old.

You’re so kind,
With love’s sweet embrace.

We’ll always be best friends,
In this beautiful world.

ON THE PLAQUE
IN THE FORESTS OF
JANESBORO

Criakins,
The Lord's creatures and angels,
Of love and peace,

Sent down to bring peace and harmony with
Kindness, humility and love.

They reflect their love and joyful humors,
Onto those who feel alone and saddened.

Celljoy was the first one that showed love,
And as he grew with the love it received,
He shared his curiosity towards those he saw.

Years later,
Celljoy and his friend Budsof,
Were blessed with love and grace.

Angelheart came around usually,
To bring the good news to those who do good.

Sandra and her husband, Max,

Enjoyed most of their time visiting the forests,
And spending time with the creatures.

Starvelvets like to curl around them,
As they sleep peacefully with their stripy bodies.

The glory shines upon them,
Is just as beautiful as gemstones.

Their peaceful and silly nature,
Reflects the child-like nature,
That the Heavenly Father wants us to have.

We've got to be like His children.

(This is a side project while I would still do the script for Meet the Criakins) ^^(This is a side project while I would still do the script for Meet the Criakins) ^^

Cast of Characters

Criakins (Caelum creaturae)

Name: Celljoy
Type: Gloria cellula

Description: A large rabbit-like creature with large ears, squishy fluff, arms, legs and wings.
Biography: Being the first specimen encountered by Sandra, after emerging from a small meteorite during the meteor shower.

Name: Budsof
Type: Fidelis germen

Description: A bud species with stubby vine-like legs, reddish fluff, leafy exterior underneath, and giant leafy wings and leafy arms.

Biography: Created with the blessing from Angelheart after Celljoy lost Noah years ago.

Name: Budchest
Type: Sodalis pectoris

Description: A gem-shaped lifeform with shades of brown and beige, large antennae and long limbs.
Biography: It pokes through a found chest with its long antennae.

Name: Calmsnug
Type: Laetus oratio

Description: A specimen spotting a light-red curved body, glowing gem in the center, red markings around its body, cowbell-like hair, stubby legs and floating arms.
Biography: It loves calming down anyone with a peaceful song or prayer.

Name: Angelheart
Type: Angeli cordis

Description: An angelic being with hearts for its body and antennas, three pairs of puffy wings, and an oval head with patterns.

Biography: Serving with the grace of the Lord, it brings peace and guidance to those in need.

Name: Amorflow
Type: Amor fluens

Description: Related to Angelheart, it has a gem-shaped body, a heart marking, soft fluffy cloud underneath, glowing halo, large antennae and long arms.
Biography: It tends to aid those in need as an ally.

Name: Starvelvet
Type: Stella velutina

Description: A giant velvet worm lifeform with a long wiggly body, stripes of orange and yellow, large thick tail with glowing stars, squishy striped antennas and blue underbelly with suckers. Seems to be related to Psychropotes longicauda.
Biography: It loves spending time with company, and its licks and silk has healing properties.

Name: Cudfly
Type: Muscae amplexae

Description: These sheep-like insect species have a large body, excess amount of fluff, large

expressive eyes, double pair of arms, stubby feet and giant butterfly-like wings.
Biography: Since they don't eat waste, they lack diseases.

Name: Algaeblob
Type: Algae guttae

Description: A large gelatin blob of algae, with long arms, giant blob appendages on top and has a seaweed smell.
Biography: Originating from lakes and rivers anywhere, it is easy going and friendly.

Name: Flowermoth
Type: Tineae florum

Description: A floral moth lifeform with large blue wings, fluffy colorful body, long arms and legs, and big antennas.
Biography: They're sought after by many observers, due to their sweet scent.

Name: Bananail
Type: Cochleae bananariae

Description: Large snail species with yellow markings and seeds speckled on its body, three large banana-like antennas, and a rock-hard shell.
Biography: Their diet gives off such a sweet fruity aroma, it is easy to spot one.

Name: Bunmoth
Type: Nuntius tinea

Description: A giant moth-like being with checkered wings, large ears with halos, and a pink fluffy body.
Biography: Despite the size, it's graceful and aids anyone if needed.

Name: Butterbun
Type: Nuntius papilio

Description: A giant butterfly-like being with checkered wings, large ears with halos, and a blue fluffy body.
Biography: Like Bunmoth, it's graceful despite the size.

Name: Grempom
Type: Gremlini lanei

Description: A gremlin-like species sporting a large oval head, small body, arms and feet, whiskers, a strain of long hair, and patterned large ears.
Biography: Despite being mischievous at times, it is very welcoming to humans and creatures alike.

Name: Chocosnail
Type: Chochleae chocolatae

Description: Large snail species with a chocolate-like spiral shell, long arms, a hat appendage with thick antennae, and multiple patterns.
Biography: Despite their shyness, they're friendly with a sweet smell.

Name: Nubulasheep
Type: Ovis nebulae

Description: A sheep-like lifeform with big star-lit eyes, fluffy exterior, long arms, legs, fluffy ears and a large halo.
Biography: It tends to hang around with other sheep playfully, and hops whenever it is happy.

Name: Bushlump
Type: Frutex grumosus

Description: A specimen with a body of leaves and branches surrounding its face, large pink leaf on the back, sucker feet and leafy arms.
Biography: It tends to camouflage around lakes and parks to avoid predators.

Name: Crawlipede
Type: Reptans millipedam

Description: Giant millipede species with a long segmented body, diamond patterns, many pairs of ticklish legs and bumpy antennae.
Biography: They're like a natural taxi service, where with command, it'll take you anywhere.

Name: Cancarrot
Type: Daucus tormentarius

Description: A carrot lifeform with long arms resembling the vegetable, fluffy white body, three leafs on top, and stubby legs with an orange-green hue.
Biography: They shoot their carrots for fun, playful like a child.

Name: Celestisstar
Type: Coelestis stella

Description: A fluffy star lifeform with a hexagon body, star pattern, long arms and feet, and a star-shaped appendage on top.
Biography: It's common for them to go outside and look up at the starry sky.

Name: Snugmoth
Type: Tinea mollis

Description: A big moth specimen with a pale body, gray spiky fur, two pairs of yellow-leaf antennas, stubby feet, and two large orange wings.
Biography: It has a small ally with it, a tiny butterfly bud.

Name: Jellybounce
Type: Curiosus gelata

Description: Large jellyfish species with a squishy pale-pink bell, star marking, big eyes and mouth, four balls, and thick tentacles.
Biography: Lacking stinging cells, it loves to crawl on the land.

Name: Melodia
Type: Pretiosus gelata

Description: Related to Jellybounce, but it has a helmet made out of gelatin around its bell and tentacles.
Biography: When on land after crawling from the waters, it checks and tickles anyone.

Name: Solisfish
Type: Luminosus mola

Description: A large ocean sunfish species, with vibrant blue and yellow colors around its body, large three blue fins for dorsal and ventral, small blue fins, lack of tail, two large eyes and a wide smile.
Biography: A smiling sunfish, likes to greet those while sunbathing.

Name: Medblob
Type: Gutta melodica

Description: A large blob with a big gem surrounded with a crown, large eyes and long thick arms.
Biography: Whenever you fall, it will be there for a soft landing so you wouldn’t get hurt.

Name: Sollux
Type: Lucerna solaris

Description: Glowing species with a head that glows, a street light upper cover, gems around it, small arms, a ring shaped like a halo, and a robe that covers its legs.
Biography: They're peaceful and friendly, lighting up while camouflaging from danger.

Name: Curlysnug
Type: Cincinni mollis

Description: A giraffe-like lifeform with a square-shaped head, soft ossicones, squishy whiskers, fluffy neck, bumpy body, medium legs and thick tail.
Biography: As it is super friendly to anyone, it can be rode on without worries.

Name: Mossdale
Type: Coelestis muscus

Description: A large moss lifeform with an elliptical body, luminescent celestial moss patterns, thick arms and feet, and glowing mossy stars.
Biography: They're a nurturing caretaker, calming down anyone with a sweet song.

Name: Astraburst
Type: Eruptio astralis

Description: A lifeform that resembles a sun, with its spiky yellow body, fluffy appendages and two halos.
Biography: When hugged, it gives off warmth from the cold.

Other Featured Creatures:

Name: Flurakin
Type: Pluralis propinquus

Description: A huge assortment of species that sports elements, colors, shapes and sizes, many varying.
Biography: The most noteworthy examples of these flurakins are fire strawberry (fragae flammantes), star pineapple (ananas stellatus), butterfloat (papiliones volantes), fire (ignis pluralis), ice (glacies pluralis), electric (electrico pluralis) and nature (natura pluralis).

(species created by Vashan0217)

Name: Aurivella
Type: Aurivelle explorator

Description: A fungus-like species with a large colorful bell, big body underneath it, long arms and legs.
Biography: They're commonly curious with any surroundings, since they came from far away. The most well known examples are Shroomie and Shroombelle.
(Species created by Princess Amelia)

Name: Dropple
Type: Hilaris gutta

Description: An upside down teardrop species from space, sporting long light blue arms, and big orange legs and feet.
Biography: Very cheerful adventurers from faraway, especially those like Smitty and Milly.
(Species created by Tetriser)

Name: Ovyx
Type: Ovymax electrum

Description: Small, mechanical aliens with a round metallic shell, two to four flexible arms, small antennae, a crest, a v-shaped beak with inner teeth and one big mechanical eye.
Biography: From a faraway planet, shy but friendly.
(Species created by ThisUnrealman7)

Name: Stopette
Type: Amica signum

Description: A flat-sign being from far away, resembling a stop sign with metallic arms and a body that hops around.
Biography: Very friendly and welcoming, is best friends with Railette.
(Character created by EngingerBreadMan)

Name: Maia
Type: Axolotl timidus

Description: An axolotl with fluff, large gills and tail, friendly smile, blue sweater, legs and paws.
Biography: Timid and shy, but also curious and friendly.
(Creature created by Tropie)

Name: Ielle

Type: Pistris amicus

Description: A shark with a sweet whipped cream appendage and light brown body, fin, bowtie, legs and arms, and a tail.
Biography: While also shy like Maia, she does her best to be a kind and cheerful shark.
(Creature created by Tropie)

Name: Ribbola
Type: Vitta amicus

Description: Oval head with red ribbons, black bottom body with 2 pairs of ribbon arms that move like plants and can elongate.
Biography: Uses ribbons to comfort and defend those in need.
(Character created by Vee Tee)

Name: Athie
Type: Caelesti puero

Description: A peaceful being with a fluffy white body, wings, long black arms and legs.
Biography: Very affectionate and hyperactive in its temperament, but also treats everyone with equal respect too
(Character created by Numeribal)

Name: Solit
Type: Placida lux

Description: Related to Sollux, but with orbs instead of gems on its upper-cover, and its body is fluffy with small arms.
Biography: Like Sollux, it's very curious and friendly to anyone.
(Character created by A.V. Worth)

Name: Sweetfluff
Type: Dulcis vellus

Description: A small being with a white body and cute sticking face, lots of pink fluffy hair, sticks of candy on top and legs.
Biography: Silly yet sweet, it tends to snuggle up with anyone.
(Character created by A.V. Worth)

Polgo (character created by Npartwork1011)

Humans

Sandra Mallory: A long haired African American woman residing in Janesboro and works for a television station. She hosts the Christmas party for any of the lifeforms to have fun.

Max Pearlman - Sandra's husband and camera man for the station. He's much less of a coward compared to before, but even so, he'll still have his moments.

Dustin Oldfield - One of the two pastors.

Don Sutherland - The other Christian pastor, and the one who documented the Criakins in his own notebook.

Winthrop Lynch - The boss and station manager of CJBY-TV.

Miguel Ravia - A news reporter for CJBY-TV.

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I want to dedicate and thank my Heavenly Father, for the gift to make people happy and the talents we do for good. And I also want to thank Jesus Christ as well, as I have accepted Him and want to do good for the benefit of others.

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Damian Lacombe

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